Dr S.M. Ikram

MODERN MUSLIM INDIA AND THE BIRTH OF PAKISTAN

THIRD REVISED EDITION

INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC CULTURE
CLUB ROAD LAHORE

MODERN MUSLIM INDIA
AND THE
BIRTH OF PAKISTAN

MODERN MUSLIM INDIA AND THE BIRTH OF PAKISTAN

(1858–1951)

S. M. IKRAM
M.A., HON. D.LITT.

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INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC CULTURE
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To

The Memory

of

IQBAL

From the
PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

THIS book was published, in its present form, in the latter half of 1965. The first edition got exhausted sooner than was expected and I have been unable to carry out the revision and rewriting which I had planned. The work of all those who, like the present writer, undertake such jobs in addition to other heavy responsibilities must suffer from certain deficiencies This applies to all my books, but the present one has had a somewhat peculiar history. It was originally compiled in 1946, as an amended English version of my Urdu book, *Mauj-i Kausar*. It was unpublished when the Partition took place and after that the manuscript had to be laid aside for some years. In 1950, a chapter on Liaqat Ali Khan was added and with some other additions the book appeared as *Makers of Pakistan and Modern Muslim India*. The bulk of the material included in the book was the same as had been compiled in 1946 and was really a book written by a layman for laymen. It was not burdened with footnotes or even with citations, and treatment was kept simple to suit the requirements of the general reader. Owing to the paucity of the material on the subject, however, the book was utilised in some educational institutions and I tried to make the enlarged version, issued as *Modern Muslim India and the Birth of Pakistan*, somewhat more systematic. References were given regularly and copious footnotes added in respect of the additional matter included in this edition, but the greater part of the book remained as it had been written in 1946.

I was hoping that when the time came for a second edition of *Modern Muslim India and the Birth of Pakistan* I would be able to rewrite the whole book, quote authorities for all important statements and omit certain portions, e.g. details relating to the history of Aligarh College, which were no longer of material significance. This has not been possible within the time allowed by the publisher for the preparation of the second edition. A good deal of the book, therefore, appears as it was written in 1946, but no

effort has been spared to make it more comprehensive and up-to-date. An enormous mass of new material relating to the struggle for Pakistan has appeared in England, Pakistan and India. Every effort has been made to secure this material and utilise it for purposes of additional information, or rebuttal, where necessary.

Even more strenuous work has gone into the collection of data regarding the areas which constitute Pakistan. So little work had been done in the past in relation to these areas that important figures like Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhry, Sir Shamsul Huda, and Sir Abdul Rahim of Bengal, and Sardar Muhammad Hayat Khan and Khan Bahadur Barkat Ali Khan of the Punjab, Hasan Effendi of former Sind and Sahibzadah Sir Abdul Qayum of the Frontier rarely find any place in the history of the Muslim struggle. Very special efforts have been made to collect particulars about them and give them their proper place in the national history. This has not always been easy and some of the accounts offered here can be treated as tentative. The section relating to Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy has been greatly enlarged and it is hoped justice will be at long last done to that brilliant man, whose share in the achievement of Pakistan was, probably, second only to that of the great Quaid. A special effort has also been made to deal with those who distinguished themselves in the work for the Muslim League in the Punjab, like Malik Barkat Ali, Mian Bashir Ahmad, and Hameed Nizami. At the same time an attempt has been made to achieve a balanced view of the controversies in the Punjab and to show in what respects the position of the Quaid-i Azam differed from that of the group that has found such an eloquent spokesman in Ashiq Husain Batalvi.

The previous edition of this book contained an important new chapter entitled *Jinnah the Man and the Statesman*. The elucidation of the achievements and the policies of the Father of the Nation has been further enlarged in this edition. During my study of the events relating to the Partition nothing has impressed me more than the immeasurable superiority of the Quaid over all his colleagues and the great qualities of his head and heart. His papers have yet not been examined and will require study by well-informed, responsible and understanding archivists, but the vast

volume of literature which has poured in in recent years regarding the Partition from quarters often unfriendly to the Quaid enables us to see fairly clearly the lineaments of his personality and leaves no doubt about his greatness and essential goodness. The present writer has been approached by some admirers of the Quaid to undertake a full-length biography of the Quaid. In the absence of Quaid's papers it is not possible to attempt a really satisfactory biographical study, but in the present volume enough has been written to bring out not only the Quaid's sterling qualities but also show how far removed from the truth is the picture generally painted of him in India and Pakistan. Largely, this has been done by showing the Quaid in action, e.g. by explaining his handling of the Punjab affairs or by outlining the steps taken by him as the Governor-General of Pakistan not only to save the State from being overwhelmed by unprecedented problems but to safeguard the interests of the non-Muslim minorities. There are also some general sections and it is hoped that a sufficient number of new points have been raised and enough evidence put forward to enable the future biographer to do justice to this greatly misunderstood personality. . . .

S. M. IKRAM

From the

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THIS book originally appeared in 1950, under the title *Makers of Pakistan and Modern Muslim India* (by A.H. Albiruni) and has been out of print for some years. It was not reissued earlier, as I wished to bring the account up-to-date. This has not been found possible, and the present volume deals only with the period ending with the death of Liaqat Ali Khan. The original book has, however, been greatly enlarged, and I hope the additions are substantial enough to justify the change in the title. Out of the fifteen chapters, five are entirely new—including a long chapter on developments in the areas which now constitute Pakistan—and there are considerable additions in others. A new section, which may not find ready acceptance, but which has given the writer something of a joy of discovery relates to "Jinnah, the man and the statesman". Some tendentious statements regarding the happenings in East Punjab at the time of Partition, made by V.P. Menon in his *The Transfer of Power in India*, which is an important source book for the period, have made it desirable to deal with that grisly chapter in the history of the subcontinent at some length.

The book has been inscribed to the memory of Iqbal, not only in acknowledgment of the way he inspired the author's generation, but also in gratitude for many acts of personal kindness. . . .

In the end, it may be worthwhile stating that the conclusions drawn in the course of the narrative and comments made are entirely my responsibility. "There is nothing official about this book. It is a purely private and personal affair."

S. M. IKRAM

1 July 1965

INTRODUCTION

IN the coming pages an attempt has been made to trace the developments concerning Muslims of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent from the unsuccessful War of Independence till the death of Liaqat Ali Khan. Our approach has been largely biographical, but figures have been so selected, and the sketches so arranged, that it may be possible to read in these pages a more or less connected story of the struggle which ultimately led to the establishment of Pakistan.

The British success in quelling the country-wide Revolt of 1857, and the direct assumption by the Queen of England, of government of India, finally set the seal on the extinction of the Mughul Empire of Dehli. It was followed by a further weakening of the Muslim political position which had continued to decline since the death of Aurangzeb. After the Revolt, the position of the Muslims deteriorated still further, as they had to bear the brunt of the distrust, nay, active hostility, of the new masters. Syed Ahmad Khan and his band of workers had to deal with this situation, and by winning the confidence of the British rulers of India, and by urging upon the Muslims to learn modern sciences and acquire new learning, they enabled the Indian Muslims to adjust themselves to the new circumstances.

For nearly forty years this group, or what may be called the Aligarh School of Politics, was in power, and our first three sketches, i.e. those of Syed Ahmad Khan, Hali and Mohsin-ul-Mulk, relate to the leaders of this group.

Viqar-ul-Mulk was also one of the Aligarh band of workers, but he had to assume leadership at a time when the annulment of the partition of Bengal, in December 1911, clearly showed that government was not proof against the pressure of political agitation, and it was impossible to safeguard the just interests of Indian Muslims by depending wholly on the goodwill and fairplay of the government in power. The last years of Viqar-ul-Mulk and the career of Maulana Muhammad Ali belong to a period when the old

Aligarh policy had lost ground and a new one had yet to take its place. The process of transformation was greatly accelerated by Shibli and Abul Kalam Azad, who not only criticised the policy of the Aligarh School in political, religious, and educational spheres, but tried to build up a rival leadership by organising and increasing the influence of the Ulama. The resultant confusion was brought to an end by two men of genius—*Hakim-ul-Ummat* Iqbal, and *Quaid-i Azam* Jinnah. They supplied the want of a new, realistic and constructive policy, and one, by seeing the vision of a Muslim state formed by grouping together of Muslim majority areas, and the other, by establishing that state, brought the new policy to a successful end. The way for the success of the Quaid was paved by the provincial leaders who built up the Muslim position in the areas where they were in a majority but had been politically and economically ineffective, and by the Aga Khan, who headed the historic Simla Deputation in 1906 and played an important part at the Round Table Conference, a quarter of century later. Muslim Bengal was slow to start, but its contribution on two crucial occasions—at the time of foundation of All-India Muslim League at Dacca in 1906, and again, at the time of Partition—was important, almost decisive. Amongst her worthy sons whose careers have been sketched in this book are Syed Ameer Ali, Nawab Salim Ullah Khan, A.K. Fazl-ul-Haq, Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy and Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din. Liaqat Ali Khan's role, during the lifetime of the Quaid, was that of a loyal and efficient lieutenant, but even then his services were substantial enough to earn for him the title of the Quaid's "right hand". After the Quaid's death, his responsibilities greatly increased, and the able and skilful manner in which he discharged them was a factor in the consolidation of Pakistan.

Much of the material that has been used, particularly in the earlier part of our book, is in Urdu. Foreign observers, who do not have access to the material in Urdu, have naturally taken time to grasp fully the developments in the national life of the Muslims of the subcontinent, and only now the significance of the forces which paved the way for Pakistan is being realised. For a long time it was thought that not only was the Quaid-i Azam respon-

sible for winning Pakistan, but that his advocacy was responsible for the adoption of Pakistan as a goal by Indian Muslims. Now, however, the truth is beginning to be realised. Morgan Phillips-Price, the prominent socialist leader of England, who, on account of his deep study of Muslim literature, was well qualified to understand the deeper currents influencing Muslim life, said at a meeting of the East India Association :

"Some hold the belief that but for Mr. Jinnah, who channelised the Muslim impulse for security and freedom, Pakistan would not have been achieved. After my tour of Pakistan, I am convinced that without Mr. Jinnah, it would have still come into existence. But it would have been a very painful emergence."[1]

This is, perhaps, nearer the truth. At any rate, those who will read in the coming pages an account of Syed Ahmad Khan's conversations with the Commissioner of Benares in 1867 and his historic letter to Mohsin-ul-Mulk, regarding the destiny of the Hindus and the Muslims, his remarks on Lord Ripon's Local Self-Government Bill of 1883, and his later speech advising Muslims to keep away from the Indian National Congress, will agree that the stage was set and much spade work done long before the Quaid-i Azam took up the cause of Pakistan. The Quaid's part in the struggle was decisive and he was, indeed, the chief architect of Pakistan but the foundation had been truly and firmly laid by another great man—Syed Ahmad Khan. As Dr Percival Spear remarks, "In his [Syed Ahmad Khan's] whole attitude was implicit the concept of Pakistan. It only needed the prospect of British withdrawal, something which in his day still seemed remote, to bring it to the surface."[2]

1. *Dawn*, Karachi, 13 February 1949.

2. P. Spear, *India, Pakistan and the West* (1st Ed.), p. 191.

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Chapter 1

THE BACKGROUND
(712–1857)

WHEN the proposal for a separate Muslim state was put forward, the non-Muslims were startled. For those who had not kept in touch with the Muslim standpoint expressed normally in Urdu, and had taken for granted that on the departure of the British the majority community would inherit the whole of the subcontinent, it was a "bolt from the blue". Now, however, the truth is being realised. Observations of Morgan Phillips-Price have been quoted. Even the thoughtful Hindu writers have recognised that the demand for Pakistan had its roots in the past, and was the outcome of the unwillingness of the Hindus and the Muslims to make adjustments necessary for the evolution of a common nationhood. Dr Sachin Sen, for example, says:

"Indian soil was not well watered for the sprouting of secular, democratic nationalism. What was implicit was made explicit by Pakistan. It was a tragic phase of Indian national history that *Pakistan* was not basically an unnatural growth." [1]

Muslim writers have, however, gone too far back into antiquity to trace the origin of the new state and some of them have even quoted al-Biruni (d. 1050) to indicate the basis for Pakistan. It is true that the ground for Muslim separatism was prepared when Islam entered the subcontinent, and all efforts to provide a bridge between the Hindus and the Muslims failed. For practical purposes, however, the gradual crystallisation and realisation of the idea of Pakistan is related to the period of British rule. During Muslim rule some sort of *modus operandi* had been evolved. This proved impossible of achievement when democratic institutions were introduced and changes took place in the outlook of the two communities. This book is an account of the failure of these efforts and the slow growth of separate Muslim nationhood for which a

1. Dr. Sachin Sen, *The Birth of Pakistan*, p. 196.

territorial base was found in the Muslim majority areas.

If one were asked to give a date for the beginning of modern Muslim separatism, it was probably 1869 when Syed Ahmad Khan, touched to the quick by the growing Hindu demand for replacement of Urdu by Hindi, grimly prophesied that the paths of the Hindus and the Muslims will separate. The letter in which this great realist has summed up the basis, the advantages and risks of Muslim separatism has been reproduced at length elsewhere, and gives not only the reasons which started the modern course of Muslim separatism but also contains a cool appraisal of the advantages and limitations of this course. After his grave decision Syed Ahmad who had been organising institutions hitherto for the common good of the Muslims and the Hindus—like the Moradabad School and the Scientific Society—felt that it was his duty to save the Muslim community and ensure that in the future it played a roie which bore some relation to its past. This book is a study of the efforts which this great man and his successors made to attain this object. As, however, the activities of the promoters of Hindi as well as of those who reacted sharply to this example of new Hindu resurgence had their roots in the past, a preliminary chapter is added to indicate the previous landmarks in the history of Hindu-Muslim relationship, and the gradual consolidation of separate Muslim nationhood. It has been subdivided into two sections, one dealing with the period of Muslim supremacy and the other, with the transitional period, beginning with the death of Aurangzeb, the last of the great Mughuls, and ending in 1857, with the defeat and capture of the titular Mughul Emperor Bahadur Shah.

I (712–1707)

On a small scale, the contacts between the Hindus and the Muslims began on the coastline of the Indian subcontinent much earlier, but the two people came in large-scale and sustained contact only after the Arab occupation of Sind in 712, Muhammad b. Qasim, the Arab conqueror, had to lay down the lines which were to govern their relationship and this he did in what is often

referred to as the Brahmanabad Settlement, after the scene of the battle, which made him the master of the Lower Sind. He acted in a most liberal and statesmanlike manner. He gave the Hindus all the privileges which the Muslim jurists reserve for the People of the Book, and set up a precedent which, in spite of its doubtful legal authority, became the norm during the Muslim rule. The Arab conqueror went further. He seems to have entered into a sort of partnership under which the Arabs looked after the defence of the realm and its law and order, while the Hindu *Amils*, the traditional civil servants of the area, were in charge of the civil administration. Muhammad b. Qasim was an officer of the Umayyads, but when the Abbasids succeeded them in 750, not only were these administrative policies maintained but the Arab-Indian collaboration was extended to intellectual and cultural fields.

Sind provided the first substantial link between Islam and India, but the main entry of the Muslims in the subcontinent was through the north-western passes, the traditional route of invasion. Some three hundred years after the Arab occupation of Sind, Ghazni, which had developed into a major political, military and cultural centre on the outskirts of the declining Abbasid empire, became the base of operations against the subcontinent. In 1020, Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni (998–1030) annexed Lahore. As the southern parts were already under the Muslims, this annexation meant that by 1020 the areas which constitute West Pakistan today were under Muslim rule. The heritage of Ghazni in the realm of language, religious practices and law was even more important than that of Sind. The Ghaznavids introduced Persian which was to be the official and literary language during Muslim rule in India, vigorously patronised Sunni creed and promulgated Hanafi law. With occasional and minor departures, these features characterised Indian Islam and served as a binding force.

The conquest of Northern India was the work of Muhammad Ghauri (d. 1206) who came almost two centuries after Mahmud. The original fabric of the Delhi Sultanate was built up by the patient, far-seeing and mild-mannered Iltutmash (1211–1236). Its consolidation was due to the great administrative ability of Balban who dominated Northern India, first as an all-powerful noble

(1246–1265) and later as king (1265–1287), for almost half a century. In his days the Mongol invasion was in full swing and this cool-headed realist concentrated on consolidation—to spare Delhi, as he said, the horrors which Baghdad suffered in 1258. Thanks to Iltutmash, Balban and Ala-ud-Din Khalji (1296–1316), India was spared those massacres, depredations and destruction of life and property which the Mongols perpetrated in the neighbouring countries of Central Asia. This was, however, not the period of cordial relations between the Hindus and the Muslims. For one thing, the grim situation created by the standing Mongol threat and their repeated incursions right up to Delhi necessitated strict and harsh measures. Moreover, the Muslim refugees, who had suffered so much at the hands of the non-Muslim Mongols in Central Asia, could not be friendly to non-Muslims in their new homes. The Mongol invasion, however, indirectly contributed to the consolidation of the Muslim rule as it forced a number of Muslim administrators, soldiers, saints and scholars to seek refuge in the newly conquered territories.

The Sultanate was a period of grim struggle in the political and military spheres, but the arrival of a large number of saints, scholars and missionaries led to the expansion of Islam. This was largely the work of the Sufi missionaries, who not only spread Islam in the subcontinent but, with their general piety and humanitarian approach, provided a meeting ground between Hindu and Muslim seekers after God. Partly as a result of their efforts and example and partly owing to the basic situation within the subcontinent, many Hindu and Muslim saints came together and Hindu society saw the rise of what is called the *Bhakti* movement. Many of its leaders like Kabir, Guru Nanak and Dadu emphasised common features between Hinduism and Islam, but the commonly held view that *Bhakti* was entirely a syncretic movement is wrong. The numerous Hindu saints mentioned under the so-called *Bhakti* movement represent two distinct trends, similar to the later tolerant, cosmopolitan, Brahmo Samaj and the militant Arya Samaj. Kabir, Nanak and Dadu represented the first group, while Chaitaniya and the later Sikh Gurus were spearheads of Hindu revivalism. Chaitaniya's followers made

Mathura the centre of their revivalist activities and soon came in conflict with Muslim authorities.

In the meanwhile the Mughuls had occupied the throne of Delhi (1526) and Akbar (1556–1606) launched vigorous and sustained efforts to bring the Hindus and the Muslims together. His efforts in this direction cover three distinct phases. Almost from the beginning of his rule, he tried to secure the collaboration of the Rajput chiefs, gave them high administrative posts, promulgated the policy of *Sulah Kul* (peace with all), honoured leaders of Hindu opinion, abolished *Jizyah*, discouraged the slaughter of cows and patronised Hindu arts like music and Hindi and Sanskrit literature. All this was achieved without offending Muslim opinion, as Akbar remained an orthodox and devout Muslim himself and Muslim religious leaders were still dominant at the court. The second phase began with the discussions of the *House of Worship*, built in 1575, in the course of which he became disgusted with the disputes and wranglings of Muslim religious leaders. He, now, antagonised Muslim opinion by sanctioning a number of practices against orthodox Islam and was commonly believed to be desirous of initiating a new religion. He actually started accepting disciples with a number of curious and un-Islamic practices. Whether this meant starting a new religion or initiating only a new cult or order has been a matter of controversy. It is, however, certain that Akbar's ambition was to be "the spiritual guide" of all his subjects. The third phase of his reign, during which these activities practically ceased, was marked by his estrangement with Abul Fazl in 1597 and the ascendancy of the orthodox nobles at the court. This was also the period when Khwajah Baqi Billah (1563–1603) had arrived at the capital, with the gift of a new spiritual order—the *Naqshbandiyah*—from the homelands of the Mughuls and with his piety, spiritual power and adoption of the *Naqshbandiyah* practice of influencing Muslim society by influencing the people on the top, had brought within the circle of his admirers and helpers the leading Muslim nobles at the court, like Khan-i Azam Abdul Rahim Khan-i Khanan, Shaikh Farid, the Paymaster-General, Miran Sadr Jahan and Qulich Khan, the Viceroy of Lahore.

Akbar's attempts at religious synthesis were a disastrous failure. They did not please the Hindus. The only Hindu of note who is recorded to have become a royal disciple was Birbal, regarded by succeeding generations as the court jester. Rajput nobles like Man Singh and Bhagwan Singh flatly refused to accept the royal views. The Muslims, on the other hand, were seriously offended.

Apart from the mistakes made by Akbar, his failure was due to the play of bigger forces. At this time a great Hindu religious revival was sweeping the country. Under Chaitaniya's successors Mathura had become a great centre of Hindu resurgence, where an elaborate programme of temple construction was under way. One of the biggest temples constructed at this time was built by Raja Man Singh himself. Possibly for this or another temple built at Mathura, the local Brahmans were bold enough to appropriate the material collected by the local Qazi for the construction of a mosque. Other incidents of this nature were happening in other centres of Hindu revivalism (e.g. Tahnesar), and antagonising the Muslims.

Akbar's experiments in the religious field achieved nothing. On the other hand they led to vigorous reaction under Hazrat Mujaddid Alif Sani (1564–1624). He had spent some years at Fatehpur Sikri, where he helped Faizi in the preparation of his commentary on the Quran but he violently differed from the views of Abul Fazl and was deeply hurt at the excesses of the Hindus and the low regard shown by a Muslim king for Islamic injunctions. He used his powerful pen and spiritual influence to lead a reaction against Akbar's policy. He urged reimposition of *Jizyah*, lifting of the ban on cow-killing and abrogation of various other measures taken by Akbar.

The Mujaddid is probably the most forceful religious personality in the history of Muslim India. He had received education under prominent teachers at Sialkot and Sirhind, and had crossed swords with Abul Fazl and Faizi, the leading lights of Akbar's court. He, however, did not come into his own until, at the ripe age of forty, he became a disciple of Khwajah Baqi Billah. While association with the Khwajah brought him in contact with leading Muslim nobles of the day, the spiritual training and personal

encouragement which he received from his teacher greatly heightened the Mujaddid's spiritual gifts and led to an incredible freeing of his creative powers.

The Mujaddid was a widely-read scholar, and was the greatest rhetorician and stylist in an age which had produced Abul Fazl and Badayuni. He possessed extraordinary powers of inference and argument and had great moral courage. Even in his early days he had written against the philosophers and the Shiahs. Now, in a slightly more congenial reign of Jahangir, he used his powerful pen to denounce Akbar's policy, innovations and injunctions. In 1620 his courage was put to another test. He was called to Jahangir's court in connection with the orthodox objections to some of his writings. These writings were explained away, but he carried out in practice his denunciation of Akbar's un-Islamic practices by refusing to perform the deep obeisance ordered by him for all those who came into the royal presence. He was imprisoned but released after some time and passed away in 1624. After him his work was carried on by his descendants and numerous disciples.

No single individual opposed Akbar's policy so consistently and forcefully as the Mujaddid, and some recent writers begin the rise of Muslim separatism with him. There is no doubt that he was the spearhead of Muslim self-assertion and not only did he denounce un-Islamic practices, but, through his doctrine of *Wahdat-ul-Shuhud*, provided a positive, philosophical basis for his viewpoint. He, however, had his limitations. He became the spokesman of Sunni Islam, but his views brought him into conflict not only with Akbar and the Hindus but also with the Shiahs. He held and preached that the Shiahs were heretics, deserving of capital punishment. This stand, in itself, made his teachings an imperfect basis for Muslim nationhood in the subcontinent where Shiahs formed a sizable and significant portion of the Muslim community. His other difficulty was that he was primarily a Sufi. He emphasised the importance of subordinating one's actions to the dictates of the *Shariat* but he described many mystic experiences of his own, to which strong exception was taken by the *ulama*. Shaikh Abdul Haq Muhaddis, the leading theologian

of the day, wrote a well-argued pamphlet against him, and his was not the only voice raised in criticism. When the Mujaddid was called to Jahangir's court, the influence of a Shiah *wazir* may have been at work, but it has been recorded that the *ulama* also had objected to certain remarks made by the Mujaddid and the relevant entries from his letters have been cited. Even more significant is the fact that in Aurangzeb's time, when the supremacy of Islamic law became more firmly established, a number of *fatwas* were issued against the Mujaddid's writings and, at one stage, orders were issued by Aurangzeb's Chief Qazi, banning the reading of his *Maktubat*.[2]

Aurangzeb, whose guiding principle was to uphold Islamic law and to carry out the injunctions of religious lawyers, at a late stage of his career banned the study of the *Maktubat*, but there is ample evidence to show that at an earlier date he was in close contact with the Mujaddid's descendants, had honoured many of them, and carried into practice many proposals of the Mujaddid.

Akbar's ill-conceived measures in the religious sphere had achieved nothing. On the other hand, they led to a reaction which undermined even the existing basis of harmony. This was facilitated by the failure of Dara Shukoh and the success of Aurangzeb in the war of succession to Shah Jahan. On ascending the throne, Aurangzeb (1658–1707) maintained Akbar's policy of giving Hindus a due place in administration, continued to patronise Hindi and Sanskrit literature by having a Hindi court-poet, but re-imposed *Jizyah* and abolished the ban on cow-killing. These developments widened the gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims, but perhaps more effective in consolidating Muslim nationhood during this period was the sustained support which Aurangzeb gave to the Muslim educational institutions during his long reign of fifty years. The popular Islamic curriculum known as *Dars-i Nizamiyah* was coming into being in his reign and the emperor was personally responsible for the grant of an extensive building known as Farangi Mahal of Lucknow to the family of Mulla Nizam-ud-Din, after whom the *Dars* is named. Aurangzeb

2. *Vide* Khishgi, *Maaraj-ul-Wilayat* (MS. No. SH. MSS.—6281 of Punjab University Library), p. 617.

made very large grants for the spread of education and the large-scale employment of Qazis in his reign offered lucrative openings to those who received proper education in Muslim institutions. He issued orders forbidding Muslims to attend educational institutions maintained by the Hindus. By the time Aurangzeb died, not only had the Muslim people gained a new self-confidence, but there was a large educated class which could maintain Islamic learning and provide the base for the great Islamic religious revival of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

II (1707–1857)

Aurangzeb died in 1707, and in less than fifteen years the prestige of the Mughul monarchy had reached its nadir. Even during the lifetime of the great emperor the military weakness of the Mughuls had become manifest. He spent twenty-five arduous years in the Deccan, without decisively solving the Marhatta problem. A single fort like Jinji would take seven years to capture. Aurangzeb's ability, determination and prestige held the Marhattas in check, but even before he closed his eyes their roving bands had caused havoc and spread consternation deep in the Mughul empire.

After Aurangzeb's death the pace of disintegration became precipitate. The years 1716 to 1719 saw three puppet kings succeed one another on the throne, at the pleasure of the Syed Brothers. In 1739, Nadir looted Delhi and massacred its inhabitants. In 1757, the battle of Plassey was fought and a rich fruitful province came under the sway of the East India Company. Seven years later, the Mughul emperor and the Nawab Wazir of Oudh were defeated at Buxar. By the end of the century, Ranjit Singh had occupied Lahore, and Madhuji Sindhia was supreme at Delhi. Attempts made by Hyder Ali and Tipu to reverse the trend of events in the South failed in spite of their bravery, ability and resourcefulness.

The same process of disintegration was visible in the life of the community. This was the worst period in Shiah-Sunni relationship. Aurangzeb had striven hard to sustain Sunni orthodoxy, but his son and successors made a resolute attempt to turn his empire

into a Shiah kingdom. In 1712 he ordered the Commander of Artillery to recite Shiah formula during Friday prayers from the pulpit of the Badshahi Mosque of Lahore. This was successfully resisted by the local public and Pathan soldiers who thronged the streets. There were riots elsewhere—e.g. at Ahmedabad—and the attempt was abandoned, but the eighteenth century remained a period of acute Shiah-Sunni conflict. Not only did this lead to assassinations—including that of Mirza Mazhar Jan-i Janan, a famous saint and poet—but the feud greatly weakened Muslim solidarity. It is true that it normally remained below the surface, and the divisions were not hard and fast. It is also true that the Muslims generally closed their ranks against a common non-Muslim enemy, but these divisions remained serious during the eighteenth century. Dr Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi goes so far as to say, "It was natural that a tradition should grow up of cooperation between the Shiahs and the Hindus against the major section of the Muslim community." [3] Elsewhere, dealing with the situation after the death of Aurangzeb, he says, "The rift between the Shiahs and the Sunnis increased, until it was impossible to hope for a concerted attack upon anarchy. . . . The Shiahs were unable to see that it was the power of Islam and not only that of orthodoxy which was at stake. . . ." [4] One may not wholly agree with this assessment, but it has to be recognised that, in the eighteenth century, Shiah-Sunni differences were a serious factor, and, though generally below the surface and often thinly disguised as Irani-Turani dispute, were on some important occasions—e.g. during the conflict of Safdar Jang with the Mughul king—pretty obvious and proved disastrous.

Politically, the eigteenth century remained a period of defeat and disintegration, but in the cultural and religious spheres it was a time of reconstruction. This was the period when Muslim educational system was standardised and generally adopted over the subcontinent. This period also saw the rapid rise of Urdu to the level of a literary language, capable of giving expression to the

3. Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent*, p. 189.

4. Ibid., p. 171.

thoughts, feelings and learning of Muslim India. Both these developments made for unification and consolidation of the Muslim society.

Even more important was the work of Shah Wali Ullah (1703–1761). Son of a distinguished scholar who had participated in the compilation of the famous *Fatawa-i Alamgiri*, he was born four years before the death of Aurangzeb. He was educated by his father, and later completed his studies in the Hejaz. When he was still abroad, he was receiving reports of chaotic conditions back home and was advised to stay on in Arabia. He spurned this advice and returned home to take up the task of spiritual regeneration and consolidation. In the course of a well-regulated life, he completed a whole library of books on various branches of Islamic thought, beliefs and learning, which were well suited to the religious needs of the subcontinent and marked the beginning of a new era. He translated the Holy Quran into Persian and wrote learned works on *Hadis*, but perhaps his biggest contribution to the religious life of the community was the sane, balanced point of view which he brought to the study of various subjects. The revivalism of the Mujaddid had given a new life to Islam, but a broader and more realistic approach was needed to form the basis on which various conflicting groups—the Sufi and the Mulla, the Shiah and the Sunni, the Hanafi and the Hanbali—could agree. Shah Wali Ullah averred that "*adl* [justice, balance] was the primal virtue, and the basis of all civilised existence". By making *adl* his lodestar in the treatment of controversies, he put forward a point of view from which only the extremists could differ. In particular, he worked hard and wrote numerous bulky volumes to bring Shiah-Sunni dispute to a level where they would cease to be a menace to the corporate life of Muslim India. He ably expounded and defended the Sunni point of view but, unlike the Mujaddid who held Shiahs to be *Kafir* and deserving of capital punishment, he adopted a far more liberal attitude towards them. He also stood for reform in social customs, beliefs and practices, but warned against cutting oneself adrift from the Muslim society and becoming an ineffectual angel beating one's wings in the void.

Shah Wali Ullah's work was carried on by four gifted sons

and a host of disciples and pupils. His sons produced two Urdu versions of the Holy Quran and adopted other progressive measures, but, like their father, did not break away from the community in their enthusiasm for reform and radicalism. The most influential of Shah Wali Ullah's sons was Shah Abdul Aziz, who refused an offer of appointment at Calcutta Madrassa and devoted fifty years of a dedicated life to give solace and spiritual guidance to Muslim India. In his views he was less venturous than his illustrious father, but he gave moral support to his famous disciple Syed Ahmad Brelvi, nephew Shah Ismail Shaheed and son-in-law Abdul Hayy who toured all over Northern India to carry the message of Islamic revival and social reform, and ultimately led the unsuccessful *Jihad* against the Sikhs in the north-west. The *Jihad* failed, but the enthusiasm which was generated was not confined to Delhi. Syed Ahmad Brelvi and his two distinguished companions had spent several months at Calcutta on the way to and from the holy places, and not the least important result of the movement was the new link which it established between Northern India and Muslim Bengal. After the battle of Plassey, Bengal, which even otherwise was somewhat isolated, had become cut off from the centres of Islamic learning in Northern India. This isolation was ended by the Bengali disciples of Syed Ahmad Brelvi—like Sufi Noor Ahmad of Chittagong and Maulvi Imam-ud-Din of Noakhali—and his other *Khalifahs* like Maulvi Inayat Ali of Patna and Maulvi Karamat Ali of Jaunpur who spent long years of missionary work in East Bengal. Not only did their activities bring about a new Islamic regeneration in the area, which incidentally provided a large number of recruits for *Jihad* in the north-west, but by linking Muslim Bengal with Northern India provided that cohesion in the Muslim community which a century later was to be reflected in the two areas being grouped together in the independent state of Pakistan.

Chapter 2

SYED AHMAD KHAN

(1817–1898)

I

ON 30 May 1871, Lord Mayo, the Viceroy of India, who was getting a little concerned about the continuous, violent manifestations of Muslim discontent with the British rule, asked a distinguished civil servant to study the problem, analyse the causes of the discontent and suggest remedies. That was the genesis of Dr Sir William Hunter's *The Indian Musalmans: are they bound in conscience to rebel against the Queen?*

Hunter's book was limited in its objective and written from an obviously imperialistic angle. It is, however, a mine of illuminative information on the position which Muslim India had reached within fourteen years of the unsuccessful War of Independence, and as this was also the time when Syed Ahmad returned from England, with his ambitious schemes for the uplift of his people, it would be useful to consider in detail some of its facts and figures. Dr Hunter's thesis was that if Government wished to avoid the endless repetition of "Wahabi murders," and the enormous expenditure of annual military campaigns against the "Fanatics' Colony" on the Frontier, it must remove that "chronic sense of wrong which has grown up in the hearts of the Musalmans under British rule".

That this "chronic sense of wrong" had a solid basis, was shown by Dr Hunter with an array of facts and figures regarding Bengal, which he knew intimately. First he dealt with the Muslim land-owning classes of the Eastern Bengal. He wrote:

"At Murshidabad a Muhammadan Court still plays its farce of mimic state, and in every District the descendant of some line of princes sullenly and proudly eats his heart out among roofless palaces and weed-choked tanks. Of such families I have personally

known several. Their houses swarm with grown-up sons and daughters, with grandchildren and nephews and nieces, and not one of the hungry crowd has a chance of doing anything for himself in life. They drag on a listless existence in patched-up verandahs or leaky outhouses, sinking deeper and deeper into a hopeless abyss of debt, till the neighbouring Hindu money-lender fixes a quarrel on them, and then in a moment a host of mortgages foreclose, and the ancient Musalman family is suddenly swallowed up and disappears for ever." [1]

After describing very vividly and at great length the ruin of the Muslim landed aristocracy, Hunter tersely remarks:

"If any statesman wishes to make a sensation in the House of Commons, he has only to truly narrate the history of these Muhammadan families of Bengal." [2]

Next, Hunter considers the position of Muslims in public services, which ever since the Muslims came to India (and either neglected trade and industry or found themselves powerless against the all-powerful Hindu caste-guilds) had been the principal means of livelihood for the educated Muslims. Of course, the higher posts in the Army—formerly a close preserve of the Muslims—were now denied to all Indians but, even in other spheres of public employment, the share of Muslims bore no relation either to their population or their historical traditions. Hunter first deals with the proportion of the Muslims in the Judicial and the Revenue services, which in different grades varied from one-fourth to one-tenth, and goes on to say:

"It is, however, in the less conspicuous Departments, in which the distribution of patronage is less keenly watched by the political parties in Bengal, that we may read the fate of the Musalmans. In 1869 these Departments were filled thus:—In the three grades of Assistant Government Engineers there were fourteen Hindus and not one Musalman; among the apprentices there were four Hindus and two Englishmen, and not one Musalman. Among the sub-Engineers, . . . there were twenty-four Hindus to one Musalman; among the Overseers, two Musalmans to sixty-three Hindus. In the Offices of Account there were fifty names of Hindus, and not one Musalman; and in the Upper Subordinate Department, there were twenty-two Hindus,

1. W.W. Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans* (First Edition), p. 152.
2. Ibid., p. 154.

and again not one Musalman."[3]

He similarly surveyed the professions of Law and Medicine, which revealed an equally depressing position, and after giving a table showing "Distribution of State Patronage in Bengal" in April 1871, he went on to say:

"In one extensive Department the other day it was discovered that there was not a single *employe* who could read the Musalman dialect; and, in fact, there is now scarcely a Government office in Calcutta in which a Muhammadan can hope for any post above the rank of porter, messenger, filler of ink-pots, and mender of pens."[4]

Hunter next deals with the causes of this state of affairs. He pays a high tribute to the Hindu intellect, but adds that "an universal and immeasurable superiority on the part of the Hindus, such as would be required to explain their monopoly of official preferment, is unknown at the present day, and is in direct contradiction to their past history".[5] As a matter of fact, he adds, "The truth is, that when the country passed under our rule, the Musalmans were the superior race, and superior not only in stoutness of heart and strength of arm, but in power of political organization, and in the science of political government."[6] Muslims held their own even in the intellectual sphere. "Before the country passed to us, they were not only the political but the intellectual power in India."[7] Muslim backwardness was, therefore, not due to any inherent inferiority of the community but it could be traced to historical causes which had blocked their progress. Hunter described them all, including their neglect of modern education—"Some years ago . . . out of three hundred boys in the English College [Calcutta], not one per cent were Muslim"—but he also pointed out, as clearly as a Government servant could do with propriety, that the policy, which the British Government had followed towards the Muslims, was one of the principal causes of turning the scales against them. He gives a quotation from a Persian newspaper of Calcutta, which would be a revelation to those who criticise the principle of reservation of posts for Muslims:

3. Ibid., pp. 165-66. 4. Ibid., p. 167. 5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., pp. 167-68. 7. Ibid., p. 175.

"All sorts of employment, great and small, are being gradually snatched away from the Muhammadans, and bestowed on men of other races, particularly the Hindus. The Government is bound to look upon all classes of its subjects with an equal eye, yet the time has now come when it *publicly* singles out the Muhammadans in its Gazettes for exclusion from official posts. Recently, when several vacancies occurred in the office of the Sunderbans Commissioner, that official, in advertising them in the Government Gazette, stated that the appointments would be given to none but the Hindus." [8]

Hunter's facts and figures were mainly for Bengal, but the position in many other parts of the country was similar. He, himself, quotes from a petition submitted by Muslims of Orissa to the Commissioner of the Division, which, though worded in stilted phraseology, gave an indication of the Muslim position in that part of the country:

"Truly speaking, the Orissa Muhammadans have been levelled down and down with no hopes of rising again. Born of noble parentage, poor by profession, and destitute of patrons, we find ourselves in the position of a fish out of water. . . . We would travel into the remotest corners of the earth, ascend the snowy peaks of Himalayas, wander the forlorn regions of Siberia, could we be convinced that by so travelling we would be blessed with a Government appointment of ten shillings a week." [9]

The Communal Triangle in India written by the Indian socialist leaders, Asoka Mehta and Achyut Patwardhan, throws further light on the status enjoyed by Muslims in public offices at this time. We quote a paragraph, on which comment will be futile:

"Not only were the Muslims economically crushed, but educationally and socially also their position was deliberately depressed by the Government. In 1870, the Muhammadan pleaders presented two memorials to the High Court pointing out that while closed days allowed to the Christians were sixty-two, and those to Hindus fifty-two, only eleven were granted to the Muhammadans. The petition was called forth by an order that the 'Native holidays' observed by the High Court should be the same as allowed in the Government offices. In the Government offices, no Muhammadan holiday was sanctioned at all." [10]

8. Ibid., p. 172. 9. Ibid., p. 173.

10. Asoka Mehta and Achyut Patwardhan, *The Communal Triangle in India*, pp. 86-87.

II

Syed Ahmad Khan, who faced the situation of which we get a glimpse in Hunter's book, was born in 1817. His forefathers, like so many other statesmen and warriors, who gave stability and grandeur to the edifice of Islam in India, came from Iran. Some of his ancestors distinguished themselves on the battlefield, but having descended from the Holy Prophet, they had claims to spiritual sanctity also. Syed Ahmad's grandfather, who originally held a military command, was later on given a quasi-religious-quasi-judicial appointment by the Mughul emperor.

Syed Ahmad's father, Mir Muttaqi, was a religious recluse but, on account of his noble descent, wielded considerable influence and was held in particular esteem by the contemporary Mughul king, Akbar Shah II. Of him, very little is known except that he was a carefree, outspoken individual, well versed in archery and swimming, and very intimate with Shah Ghulam Ali Naqshbandi Mujaddidi, a local saint of great eminence. When, on his father's death, Mir Muttaqi was offered the ancestral rank and titles, he politely declined them as being nothing more than an empty show in the existing state of the Mughul decay.

Shah Ghulam Ali, with whom Syed Ahmad's father was very friendly, was at the time the principal saint of the Mujaddidi order. This religious order, which is an Indian offshoot of the main sect of the Naqshbandis, originated with Shaikh Ahmad of Sirhind, who in the seventeenth century led the orthodox reaction against religious innovations of the Mughul emperor, Akbar, and who is known by his followers as the great Mujaddid (the Reviver of Faith). The Mujaddidis, from the very nature of their origin, have been strict Muslims, and until Wahabism from Arabia gained currency were the puritans of Indian Islam. Shah Ghulam Ali, who was at the head of this order in Syed Ahmad's infancy, was deeply attached to Mir Muttaqi and his family. As a matter of fact, the saint, who had no children, used to say that Mir Muttaqi's sons were like his own children and they also addressed him as "Dada Hazrat" (Grandfather Saint). When Syed Ahmad was born, his father took him to the saint, who named him Ahmad,

and when the child grew to schoolgoing age, he was first brought to Shah Ghulam Ali, who taught him the Arabic alphabet. In his childhood, Syed Ahmad was frequently taken by his father to the saint, who showed great fondness for the boy and cheerfully put up with all the childish pranks of the exuberant child.

In the deeply religious atmosphere, surrounding his father and the "Grandfather Saint," Shah Ghulam Ali, the child developed that deep devotion to religion which marked him throughout his life. For his insight into the affairs of the state and first contacts with Western learning and civilisation he was indebted to his maternal grandfather, Khwajah Farid-ud-Din, who was, for eight years, Prime Minister at the Mughul Court. Khwajah Farid, whose influence during the formative years of Syed Ahmad can hardly be overemphasised, was a remarkable man in many ways. He was the foremost mathematician amongst Indian Muslims of his day, and was equally at home in practical affairs of the state. Born at Delhi, he completed his education at Lucknow and soon thereafter was appointed Superintendent of the Madrasah (College), established by Warren Hastings in Calcutta. Later, he was selected for responsible political offices by the East India Company. In 1799, he accompanied, as an Attache, the embassy sent by Lord Wellesly to Persia and was later Political Officer and Agent at the Court of the Burmese king. In 1815, he left Calcutta to take up the Ministership, offered to him by Akbar Shah II. He brought to the service of the titular Mughul emperor all the experience he had gathered in the service of the East India Company, and worked assiduously to reorganise the finances of the royal household. Unluckily, the economies which he effected were unpopular and, after some time, he had to relinquish his office. He was, however, recalled to service, and had another spell of office for more than three years.

Khwajah Farid died during Syed Ahmad's childhood, but the influence which he exercised in moulding the habits and character of his illustrious grandson was far from meagre. As Syed Ahmad's father was a religious recluse, he and his mother lived at the house of his maternal grandfather, and the observant child saw, from very close quarters, the daily life and social and

political background of a Mughul minister. He later wrote a biography of Khwajah Farid, which not only shows the profound regard which he felt for his grandfather, but gives a glimpse of the happy but disciplined and catholic atmosphere in which Syed Ahmad spent his early days.

Details of Syed Ahmad's childhood have not been preserved, but from what is on record it is easy to see that his intellectual powers developed very slowly, and in his childhood and youth, he was more marked for a robust physique and an active outdoor life than for any intellectual precocity. When his grandfather saw him sometime after his birth and noticed his unusually large hands and feet, he remarked: "A Jat [burly rustic] has been born in our family!" The many games in which Syed Ahmad took an active part in his early days strengthened his physique, but luckily his education was not altogether neglected. The education which Syed Ahmad received in his early days was not very thorough or systematic, but under the guidance of a wise mother, he received an adequate knowledge of the rudiments of subjects taught at Muslim *madrasas* of the day. What is more, he developed that real love of learning which enabled him to supplement so fully the knowledge which he had gained in early days, and became, in the course of time, not only the political but also the intellectual leader of his people.

III

Syed Ahmad's early days were spent in comfort, but, with the death of his grandfather, the family's fortunes began to decline, and when, in 1838, his father died, and the stipends and *jagirs*, which were allotted to him by his royal patron, either lapsed or were reduced, the young Syed had to seek his livelihood. At first he had to content himself with a minor clerical appointment, but he soon qualified himself for the post of a Munsif (Sub-Judge) and in 1841 was posted in that capacity at the historic town of Fatehpur Sikri.

In 1846, Syed Ahmad's elder brother died and, in order to be able to look after the family affairs, he asked for a transfer to

Delhi, where he remained from 1846 to early 1855. These nine years are of great importance in his life. For one thing, he was able to complete his education and, for another, he saw, not through the misty hues of childhood, but with the mature vision of a grown-up youth, the Indian summer of old Delhi. At that time the Mughul rule had ceased to exist, except in name, but the Mughul capital was even now attracting the most gifted Muslims of India. In the tawdry court of a titular king, Ghalib sang verses which easily excelled everything written by the poet laureates of Akbar and Shah Jahan, and, on the steps of the Jami' Masjid, the successors of Shah Wali Ullah and Shah Ismail Shaheed kept aloft the torch of religious learning and social reform. Even in houses of unemployed and decaying nobility could be found administrators like Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh and Nawab Amin-ud-Din of Loharu and cultured philanthropists like Hakim Mahmud Khan and Nawab Mustafa Khan, who in more prosperous times could have easily steered the ship of a powerful state. Syed Ahmad moved amongst them—he was one of them in every way—and the affection which he inspired amongst his elders may be judged from a remark of Ghalib who, after praising Syed Ahmad's sagacity and abilities, adds : "To me, he is like one of my own kith and kin."

Syed Ahmad drank deeply of this elevating atmosphere and his first sizable literary effort was a tribute to Delhi—*Asar-ul-Sanadid* or the "Antiquities of Delhi"—which he brought out in 1847. In this book, after patient and laborious research carried on not so much in the cool comfort of a library, as amidst the moss-covered, illegible inscriptions of half-ruined structures (which at that time had no Archaeological Department to look after them), Syed Ahmad prepared an account of the principal buildings in and around Delhi. The young author was no trained archaeologist and, after the lapse of a century, his work has been naturally superseded by more systematic accounts, but even now the historian turns with gratitude to his pioneer effort, especially as some of the buildings described in the book were destroyed during and after the Revolt of 1857, and we only know them through the description left by Syed Ahmad. Of special interest is the chapter

on "Celebrities of Contemporary Delhi" which, though written in the stilted, verbose style popular amongst Persian and Urdu writers of the day, is probably the best account of literary, religious and artistic life during the Indian summer of the Mughul Delhi.

Syed Ahmad's other literary efforts during his stay at Delhi were of a polemic nature. At this time a fierce controversy was raging between the new sect of Wahabis and the orthodox Muslims. Syed Ahmad, who was brought up in circles close to the puritanical Shah Ghulam Ali, took part in these controversies and wrote a number of pamphlets in support of the Wahabi cause. His interest in bigger religious questions increased in course of time, but luckily he soon got out of the petty sectarian polemics —for the time being to worship again at the shrine of the Muse of History. In 1855, he was transferred to Bijnore and here he commenced the editing and publication of the principal works on the history of Muslim rule in India. The first book he edited and published was *Ain-i-Akbari*, by Abul Fazl, the secretary and "friend, philosopher and guide" of Emperor Akbar. To this he later added the autobiography of Jahangir and Zia-ud-Din Barani's history of the early Muslim rulers of Delhi. Syed Ahmad's work as a historian suffers from the slips which are inevitable in the work of a busy Government official, who tries to do another wholetime job, but it was well planned and generally of a high level. In course of time, its worth was recognised by foreign scholars. M. Garcin de Tassy published, in 1861, a French translation of the book on the archaeological history of Delhi and, three years later, Syed Ahmad was elected an honorary Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society of London.

IV

In 1857, Syed Ahmad Khan was forty. He had spent nearly twenty years in judicial service, was known as a just, competent Government official, who was interested in the general welfare of the people, and who spent his leisure in scholarly pursuits. In 1857, however, a new facet of his manysided personality was

revealed. This year a great political conflagration, which began with the mutiny of some units of the Indian Army and later spread to the civil population, started and it became inevitable even for ordinary law-abiding citizens to take sides in a sanguinary conflict.

Syed Ahmad Khan was at that time a Sub-Judge at Bijnore, but, owing to his general versatility and competence, he wielded much bigger influence than is normally the share of a subordinate judicial officer. The Collector and Magistrate of the district, Shakespeare, thought very highly of him, and in view of his general interest in public welfare had entrusted to him the supervision of those activities, like public health, which later came to be entrusted to city municipalities.

When the news of the Revolt (and massacre of Europeans) at Delhi reached Bijnore, the local European officers and their families were naturally perturbed. Syed Ahmad Khan, however, reassured them and promised to look after them even at the risk of his life. Soon this promise—and all the capacity he possessed for handling men—was to be put to a test. Before long a big mob, headed by Nawab Mahmud Khan, began to assemble and threaten the Europeans, who had taken refuge in the Collector's bungalow, and it appeared likely that the refugees would suffer the same fate which Europeans had met in many other places in Northern India. Seeing the position deteriorate, Syed Ahmad decided to beard the lion in his den. Unarmed and without any escort, he faced the angry mob and approached their leader. Using all the influence which he could command, as a Syed, as a writer on religious subjects and as a trusted and esteemed public servant, he tried to convince Nawab Mahmud Khan that it was in his interest to allow the Europeans to evacuate unmolested. He was so successful in his plucky mission that the Nawab accompanied him to the Collector's bungalow, and a document was drawn up according to which the Europeans left the place in safety and the territory was taken over by the Nawab. Later the local Hindu zamindars rose against the Nawab and, when the situation became confused, the Commissioner of Meerut Division asked Syed Ahmad to take over as the Administrator of the district. He played this role for some

time, but ultimately the situation became too disturbed for peaceful administration and he had to leave the place and take shelter at Meerut.

The events at Bijnore gave Syed Ahmad Khan an opportunity to show his capacity for handling men, but the bigger Revolt in the whole country first gave him the scope for showing those qualities of statesmanship, fearlessness and supreme political wisdom which he had inherited from his maternal grandfather. As soon as order was restored after the Great Revolt, and even before its embers had fully died down, he wrote a book on *The Causes of the Indian Revolt*, which occupies a unique place in Indian political literature.

During the last fifty years, literature on Indian question has grown enormously and some able and courageous books have been written on the subject. In most cases, however, they are the work of those who have had full access to the political literature in English and have been largely inspired by the doctrines of Mill, Burke, Karl Marx and other Western thinkers. Syed Ahmad's book offers home-brewed vintage. He was ignorant of English or any other Western language and his book is noteworthy as embodying the political wisdom of a well-informed Muslim who was unacquainted with the modern political thought but who was a true heir to the traditions of Mughul statesmanship.

Even more remarkable is the courage and fearlessness of the author. The book was written when the greater part of the country was yet under Martial Law. The Anglo-Indian press was advocating "a very firm line" and the public opinion in England and in official circles in India had been deeply aroused. To criticise Government at a time like this was to play with fire. Syed Ahmad's book is, however, a scathing criticism of the previous pattern of administration and offers a full explanation, if not a vindication, of the Indian Revolt.

According to Syed Ahmad Khan, the basic cause, which ultimately led to the Great Revolt, was the absence of any Indian representing the Indian point of view in the upper councils governing the country. He said :

"Most men agree . . . that it is highly conducive to the welfare and prosperity of Government—indeed, it is essential to its

stability—that the people should have a voice in its councils."[11]

He waxed eloquent over the evils which resulted from the exclusion of Indians from the Legislative Council of India, and the ignorance of that body from the true Indian point of view. He wrote:

"[In the period preceding the Indian Revolt] Government could never know the inadvisability of the laws and regulations which it passed. It could never hear as it ought to have heard the voice of the people on such a subject. The people had no means of protesting against what they might feel to be a foolish measure, or of giving public expression to their own wishes."[12]

Next he referred to official interference in religion:

"There is not the smallest doubt that all men, whether ignorant or well-informed, whether high or low, felt a firm conviction that the English Government was bent on interfering with their religion, and with their old-established customs."[13]

Recounting the many causes which led to this belief he stated:

"[It was thought] that Government, and the officers of Government throughout the country, were in the habit of giving large sums of money to these missionaries, with the intention of covering their expenses, enabling them to distribute books, and in every way aiding them. Many covenanted officers and many military men have been in the habit of talking to their subordinates about religion ; some of them would bid their servants come to their houses and listen to the preaching of missionaries."[14]

Syed Ahmad strongly criticised the laws providing for the resumption of revenue-free lands granted by the previous Governments, as "most obnoxious". He said: "The people said that Government not only did nothing for them itself, but undid what former Governments has done."[15]

He also complained about the lack of social intercourse between the British and the Indian sections of the public. "There was no real communication between the governors and the governed, no living together or near one another, as has always been the custom of the Mohammedans in countries which they subjected

11. Quoted in Graham, *The Life and Work of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan* (2nd Edn.), p. 26.

12. Ibid., p. 27.

13. Ibid., p. 28.

14. Ibid., p. 29.

15. Ibid.

to their rule."[16] He made it clear that "it was . . . for Government to try and win the friendship of its subjects, not for the subjects to try and win that of the Government."[17] He added: "Now the English Government has been in existence upwards of a century, and up to the present hour has not secured the affections of the people."[18]

He even criticised the handling of the mutineers at Meerut. They were brave people who had served the East India Company loyally, had won medals and decorations, and refused to bite the cartridges (the biting of which would have "destroyed their castes"), because they thought that this "was no crime at all". They were, however, "punished in a manner which thinking men know to have been most wrong, and most inopportune".[19] He further adds:

"The prisoners, on seeing their hands and feet manacled, looked at their medals and wept. They remembered their services, and thought how they had been recompensed."[20]

Syed Ahmad Khan had written a fearless—almost a dangerous—book, but the political sagacity which enabled him to put his finger on the defects of the administration also saved him from the consequences of his act. When the book was translated into English and discussed in the Viceroy's Council, Cecil Beadon, the Foreign Secretary, characterised it as "highly seditious," and recommended that the author should be duly punished. As, however, the Viceroy and other members were convinced of the *bona fides* of Syed Ahmad Khan, no action was taken but what really silenced Beadon's fears was the knowledge that not a single copy of the book had been sold to the public in India! It was written, not to incite the people against the Government, but to acquaint the authorities with the hardships which people were suffering, and so, with the exception of a few copies which he retained himself, Syed Ahmad Khan sent all other copies to the Secretary of State for India, Members of Parliament, and high officials at Delhi and Calcutta.

The first published English translation of the book was pre-

16. Ibid., p. 33. 17. Ibid., p. 35. 18. Ibid., p. 36.
19. Ibid., pp. 38, 39. 20. Ibid., p. 39.

pared in 1873 by Sir Auckland Colvin (later Lieutenant-Governor of U.P.) and Major-General Graham, but, of course, English versions had been prepared for official use much earlier. In the India Office, the book was translated, noted upon, discussed and became the starting point for many reforms, e.g. the appointment of Indians to the Legislative Council, which began almost within a year of the publication of the book.

An interesting anecdote about the book has been narrated by Sahibzadah Aftab Ahmad Khan, later a member of the Council of Secretary of State for India. When he was studying in England, he met Allan Octavian Hume, the founder of the Indian National Congress, who was a great admirer of Syed Ahmad Khan, but was puzzled by his opposition to the Congress.

Recalling this, Aftab Ahmad Khan said in the course of his Presidential Address at the All-India Muslim Educational Conference held at Aligarh in 1933: "I also wish to mention that when, in 1892, I had an occasion to meet in London late Mr A.O. Hume, the founder of the Indian National Congress, he said to me that it was the influence of Sir Syed's book, *The Causes of the Indian Revolt*, which led him to think of establishing an organisation like the Indian National Congress."[21] *The Aligarh Institute Gazette* gives a more elaborate account of the interview which is of considerable interest to the historian of the Indian National Congress as well as the biographers of Syed Ahmad Khan. According to this version, Hume said to the Sahibzadah: "It was after reading Syed Ahmad's book on the *Causes of the Indian Revolt* that I first felt the need for having a forum of public opinion in India, and eventually the Indian National Congress came into existence. But the amazing thing is that when it was started, Syed was the first to oppose it."[22]

Events of 1857–58 constituted a great national tragedy, but to judge by all appearances, Syed Ahmad himself had not fared badly. He emerged from the conflict without doing anything

21. *Khutubat-i-Alia*, p. 137. Translated from Urdu.

22. *Vide The Aligarh Institute Gazette*, quoted in Syed Tufail Ahmad, *Musalmanon Ka Roshan Mustaqbil*, p. 286. Translated from Urdu.

which could cause him remorse, either as a loyal Government servant or as a patriotic Indian. The Revolt had also provided him with an opportunity to write a book, which at once brought him into the front rank of the leaders of Indian opinion. Apparently, Syed Ahmad himself had not been affected adversely by the course of events, but if one studies his speeches and writings of this period, one feels that this was the greatest blow he ever suffered. His sorrow and anguish was unlimited. The grief turned his hair prematurely grey, and completely changed the course of his life.

The reasons for this intense and sharp reaction were twofold —both personal and national. Syed Ahmad himself was unhurt, but his near and dear ones had suffered terribly during the reprisals which the British encouraged or countenanced after the fall of Delhi. His mother was at the Mughul capital during the disturbances, and when he went to visit her after the British occupation of the city, heart-breaking sight met his eyes:

> "On reaching his house, he heard that his mother had taken refuge in one of her *syce's* [horse-attendant's] houses and he followed her there. On his calling out to her she opened the door, crying out, 'Why have you come here? All are being killed. You will be killed also.' He told her not to be afraid, as he had a special pass. He then found out that for five days she had been living on the horses' grain, and was very weak. For three days she had had no water." [23]

He took his mother back with him to Meerut, but what she had undergone was too much for her and, in spite of the best medical assistance, she died within a month. "Syed Ahmad's uncle and cousin, whose house adjoined his at Delhi, were slain unarmed by the infuriated Sikhs three days after the assault." Graham who has recorded all this adds: "They were as loyal as Syed Ahmad himself; but at that dreadful time many innocent men, I grieve to say, suffered for the sins of the guilty."

Syed Ahmad's personal loss was heavy, but when he saw what the Muslim community had suffered, his grief was inconsolable. In the indiscriminate massacre, arson and loot, which followed

23. Graham, op. cit., p. 21.

the British occupation of the city, Delhi, which Syed Ahmad had known so well and loved so tenderly, simply ceased to exist. The British quarrel was really with the mutineers and their comrades in arms, but partly to strike terror in the minds of Indians in general, and partly out of anger at the mad massacre of European women and children at the hands of the mutineers, the authorities unleashed the dogs of war on the vast civil population of the city. Besides, in order to enlist the support of the Sikh soldiery, the Punjab officials had, by narrating legendary tales, stirred their religious zeal to the white heat of fanaticism and, in this hypnotised state, the Sikh soldiers committed atrocities which were more revolting than even those committed by the angry British soldiers. What Delhi suffered in these conditions is hard to describe but easy to imagine. Not a house was safe; not a human being was secure. For several days after the British occupation of Delhi, civilians were shot at sight and, when this was over, trials under Martial Law started and any wretch, who had a grievance against another or who wanted to win the favour of the victors, would come forward with accusation of complicity against the best and the noblest, and was readily believed. All the celebrities of Delhi, whom Syed Ahmad had described in his *Asar-ul-Sanadid*, were dead or were hiding to save their lives. The vast quarter of the city between the Fort and the grand mosque, which housed the Mughul aristocracy, was completely razed to the ground and ploughed up. The grand mosque of Shah Jahan was taken over by the army, and the Anglo-Indian press was freely debating whether it should be destroyed or converted into a church!

Syed Ahmad's grief at what he saw was boundless. He felt that India was no place for a self-respecting Muslim and wanted to retire from service and migrate to Egypt. About this time, Shakespeare, whose life he had saved at Bijnore, wanted to recommend him for the grant of the taluka of Chandpur. Syed Ahmad, however, refused to be enriched by the grant of a taluka which had been forfeited as punishment to a Muslim talukdar, and informed Shakespeare that he did not want to stay in India. Recalling those fearful days he later stated in a public speech:

"At that time I did not believe that my people would regain even something of their prosperity, and I could not bear to see the condition in which they were at that time. . . . Believe me, this grief aged me and my hair turned grey."

Luckily Syed Ahmad did not yield to the counsel of despair, and realising that "it would be an act of cowardice and selfishness to seek a haven of peace when one's people were in a desperate condition," he gave up the idea of migration from India, and chose the stony path of a hard struggle and patient, assiduous labour.

He pondered over the tragedy which had overtaken his country and came to the conclusion that it was caused by ignorance. He, therefore, set himself to the task of educating both the ruler and the ruled, and removing the causes of possible friction and misunderstanding. The first task he had commenced with his *Causes of the Indian Revolt*, and he continued it throughout his life by a courageous representation of the viewpoint of his countrymen.

For this purpose, in 1866, he organised a British India Association at Aligarh which an Indian political scientist has described as "the forerunner of the Congress". [24] The object of this organisation was to make known the grievances and the point of view of Indians to the British people in general and the British Parliament in particular. It made several useful and effective representations to Parliament and the Government of India regarding Indian grievances. The Association had, comparatively speaking, a short existence as in 1867 Syed Ahmad was transferred from Aligarh and at his new station he could barely attend to the affairs of the Scientific Society which had been started two years earlier. The attitude of the British India Association on political questions may, however, be seen from the extracts of Syed Ahmad's address to the Association on 10 May 1866. According to the extracts given by his biographer Graham and partly quoted by Honourable R.M. Sayani in his Presidential Address at the Twelfth Session of the All-India National Congress, Syed Ahmad said: "It has

24. G.N. Singh, *Landmarks in Indian Constitutional and National Development*, I, 174.

been a matter of sincere regret to all thinking natives that since the assumption of the reins of Government of India by her most gracious Majesty Queen Victoria in person, the attention of her Parliament has not been more bestowed upon measures affecting the future welfare of the inhabitants of this portion of her dominions."[25]

He referred to the apathy displayed by the Indian public and added: "Is this state of things to continue or has time now come when the interests of this great dependency are to be properly represented in the governing body of the British nation?" He continued, in course of his address: "The actions and laws of every Government, even the wisest that ever existed, although done or indicated from the most upright and patriotic motives, have at times proved inconsistent with the requirements of the people, or opposed to real justice. The Indians have, at present, little or no voice in the management of the affairs of their country, and should any measure of Government prove obnoxious to them, they brood over, appearing outwardly satisfied and happy, whilst discontent is rankling in their minds."[26]

Syed Ahmad also saw that the unsuccessful War of Independence was being represented as a Muslim revolt, and the Muslims were being suppressed with a very heavy hand. He tried to correct the wrong impression of the British officials, and started a magazine, *The Loyal Mohammedans of India*, in which the faithful services of Muslim noblemen were recorded.

But his efforts were principally devoted to the general education of his own countrymen. He realised that unless they received adequate modern education, their condition could not improve and they could not occupy an honourable place amongst the nations of the world. Graham, his biographer, writes: "Syed Ahmad's [motto] was 'Educate, educate, educate.' 'All the socio-political diseases of India may,' he once said to me, 'be cured by this treatment. Cure the root, and the tree will flourish.'"[27] So

25. Graham, op. cit., p. 60.
26. Quoted in R.M. Sayani's Presidential Address at the Twelfth Session of the All-India National Congress.
27. Graham, op. cit., p. 48.

he started establishing schools, wherever he was posted. The first was started in 1858 at Moradabad, and the second at Ghazipur in 1863. Both these schools were established with the support of the Hindu and Muslim gentry and roused much more popular enthusiasm than the schools opened by the Christian missionaries, who had a virtual monopoly of modern education in those days.

Syed Ahmad's principal measure for the spread of knowledge (before he founded Aligarh College) was, however, the establishment of the Scientific Society—originally known as the Translation Society—which was started at Ghazipur in January 1864. While starting schools and prescribing their curriculum, he realised that Indian languages lacked useful literature contained in the languages of the West. In a speech delivered in 1863 at Calcutta, he said: "The reason, gentlemen, why we are all so backward nowadays, is that whilst we are learned in and have benefited by the philosophy, sciences, and arts of antiquity, we are almost entirely ignorant of those of modern times."[28] He tried to supply this deficiency by organising a Society for getting useful books in English translated into Urdu. The Society published *The Aligarh Institute Gazette* which was devoted to the spread of knowledge and education, and was responsible for the translation in Urdu of a number of books—including Elphinstone's *History of India*, Mill's *Political Economy*, Malcolm's *History of Persia* and many works on agriculture, chemistry, zoology, etc.

So far Syed Ahmad's efforts were directed towards the advancement of all his countrymen—both Hindus and Muslims. The British India Association, as well as the school at Ghazipur, was started with the help of both the communities, and the Scientific Society was being managed by Syed Ahmad with the help of his lifelong Hindu friend—Raja Jai Kishen Dass. In 1876, however, when Syed Ahmad was at Benares, a development took place which diverted the course of his activities, and as this change has affected the history of this subcontinent, it may be worthwhile examining at length the causes which led to this development. Altaf Husain Hali, the biographer of Syed Ahmad,

28. Ibid., p. 50.

writes:

"In 1867 some Hindu leaders of Benares resolved that, as far as possible, the use of the Urdu language, written in Persian script, should be discontinued in Government Courts and should be replaced by the Hindi language, written in Devnagri script.

"Sir Syed used to say that this was the first occasion when he felt that it was now impossible for the Hindus and Muslims to progress as a single nation and for anyone to work for both of them simultaneously. His words were:

"'During these days when Hindi-Urdu controversy was going on in Benares, one day I met Mr Shakespeare who was posted there as the Divisional Commissioner. I was saying something about the education of the Muslims, and Mr Shakespeare was listening with an expression of amazement, when, at length he said: "This is the first occasion when I have heard you speak about the progress of the Muslims alone. Before this you were always keen about the welfare of your countrymen in general." I said: "Now I am convinced that both these communities [nations][29] will not join wholeheartedly in anything. At present, there is no open hostility between the two communities, but on account of the so-called 'educated' people, it will increase immensely in future. He, who lives, will see."

"'Mr Shakespeare, thereupon, said, "I would be sorry if your prophecy were to prove true." I said: "I am also extremely sorry, but I am convinced about the accuracy of this prophecy."' "[30]

In one of his letters, which was written when Hindu members of the Scientific Society made a move to substitute Hindi for Urdu in its publications, Syed Ahmad repeated this gloomy forecast. On 29 April 1870, he wrote to Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk in a letter, which admirably sums up the *raison d'etre* of Muslim separatism, its advantages—and its dangers:

"I have learnt another news which has caused me so much grief and anxiety. At Babu Shiv Parshad's instigation, Hindus have generally resolved to do away with the Urdu language and Persian script, which is a memento of the Muslim rule in this country. I have heard that they have moved the Hindu members of the Scientific Society to see that Hindi should replace Urdu in

29. In Urdu the same word *qawm* stands for *nation* as well as *community*.

30. Altaf Husain Hali, *Hayat-i-Jawaid* (3rd Ed.), p. 94. Translated from Urdu.

the newspapers as well as books published by the Society. This is a proposal which will make Hindu-Muslim unity impossible. Muslims will never agree to Hindi, and if Hindus, also following the new move, insist on Hindi, they also will not agree to Urdu. The result will be that the Hindus and Muslims will be completely separated.

"So far there is no danger; on the other hand, I think that if the Muslims start business separately from the Hindus, they will gain and the Hindus will lose, but there are two considerations against this course. One objection is from my own temperament, which is keen for the welfare of all Indians—Hindus as well as Muslims—and the other fear is that at present the Muslims are under a cloud of ill-luck and adversity. They are under the influence of false and meaningless prejudices, and do not understand their own welfare. In addition, they are more jealous of each other and more vindictive than the Hindus and suffer much more from a sense of false pride. They are also poorer, and for these reasons, I fear that they may not be able to do much for themselves."[31]

V

In 1869, Syed Ahmad's son Syed Mahmud was awarded a scholarship for higher studies at Cambridge and Syed Ahmad decided to accompany him to England. He had, for long, toyed with the idea of visiting England and studying for himself the sources of England's power, and his son's visit seemed to offer a suitable occasion to carry out his plans. So, at the age of fifty-two, when most persons in India feel that they are entitled to a well-earned rest, he left his country on his long, expensive and (at that time) most unpopular journey.

He stayed in England for seventeen months and had a very busy time. He had a number of friends amongst the retired British officers and they showed him great courtesy and kindness. Lord Lawrence, for example, used to call on him every month and arranged for his visits to important institutions. He was elected an honorary member of the Atheneum. He was received at the India Office by the Duke of Argyle, the Secretary of State, who was also Patron of the Scientific Society (of which Syed Ahmad

31. *Maktubat-i Sir Syed*, pp. 103–04. Translated from Urdu.

was founder-Secretary) and the insignia of C.S.I. was conferred on him.

In England, Syed Ahmad had numerous social and political engagements, but his time was mainly taken up by two things. The first was the preparation of a reply to *The Life of Mahomet* by Sir William Muir. He had seen the book, some years back, in India, and one of the objects of his English journey was to collect material for the refutation of this unfair and warped biography of the Prophet. During his study of the subject in England, Syed Ahmad tried to help and encourage all efforts that were being made to do some justice to this much-maligned personality. He met Carlyle, who had been comparatively fair to the Holy Prophet in his *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, and favourably impressed the Sage of Chelsea. He also came to know John Davenport, who had written *An Apology for Mohammed and the Koran*, but was unable to find any publisher for his book. Syed Ahmad had the book published at his own expense and got it translated into Urdu. He, however, realised that a more elaborate and scholarly study of the life of the Prophet was necessary than was possible for Carlyle or Davenport to write, and set about the task himself. He spent the greater part of his working hours in libraries of the British Museum and the India Office, and after months of patient research, *Essays on the Life of Mohammed* was ready for the press. Syed Ahmad's letters give a touching account of what he had to undergo to complete the book, and, later, to have it published. The book was a bulky one and, of course, no publisher would bring it into the market except at the author's expense. Syed Ahmad had to spend nearly Rs 4000 to see the result of his love's labour in print, and wrote to his friends in India to sell his library—even his kitchen utensils—to raise the money. The book has, in course of time, been excelled by other literature on the subject (particularly by Syed Ameer Ali's *Spirit of Islam*), but it ranks high as a pioneering effort and is a worth monument to Syed Ahmad's industry, scholarship, robust common sense and devotion to the Holy Prophet.

Syed Ahmad spent a lot of his time in England in removing misconceptions about Islam and its Prophet, but, of course, he was

too shrewd and too fair not to see that the difficulties of Islam and Muslims would not be solved merely by the publication of polemic or apologetic literature. There were many things to be set right amongst Muslims, and the true well-wisher of the community had to look to them—even at the risk of his popularity. Syed Ahmad was very favourably impressed by the habits and manners of the English people—by their industry, their cleanliness, their punctuality and their orderly mode of living. Even a maid-servant was polite, well trained and educated. She would regularly read her copy of the half-penny paper. Syed Ahmad thought that his people had to reform themselves in many of these things and felt that right education was the key to all problems. He visited Cambridge and other British Universities, and, after discussion with his son and others, decided that on his return to India, he should work for the spread of suitable modern education amongst his co-religionists and aim at the foundation of a Muslim Cambridge in his country.

Towards the end of 1870 Syed Ahmad returned to India, and soon thereafter started *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* (*Mohammedan Social Reformer*) for which he had prepared plans, and even obtained some blocks while in England. The first issue of the *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* appeared on 24 December 1870 and, with it, Syed Ahmad began a vigorous campaign for improving the morals and manners of his co-religionists. The child who had bluntly told the Mughul emperor that he was late in attending his Durbar because he had gone to sleep and the government officer who had sold his kitchen utensils to find money to refute and criticise a book written by the all-powerful Governor of his province was not going to mince matters where defects of his own people were concerned. Syed Ahmad was fair by nature, and his opinions were normally sound and reasonable, but if he disapproved of anything, he did not keep his views to himself. In *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq*, he ruthlessly criticised all the customs and habits which, he thought, were holding up the progress of his people. He compared them with those of the nations of the Western world and used the strongest language to bring home to his co-religionists their backwardness and intellectual decay.

The effect which *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* produced was almost electric, and not exactly what Syed Ahmad would have desired. He had already offended the orthodox in 1868 by advocating in a pamphlet that interdining of Muslims with Christians or Jews was not unlawful. His journey to England was also not very popular. But when he began to criticise the age-old customs and paint in lurid colours the condition of Muslim society, there was a hue and cry against him and his writings. He had assailed the pride of those people who had lost everything except that and they would not take it lying down. Syed Ahmad made things more difficult by not confining the contents of the magazine to questions of social reform but also by writing unorthodox articles on religious subjects. The result was what might have been expected. A number of magazines came into being to oppose Syed Ahmad. He was called a "Kafir," an "Atheist," a "Kristan" (Christian). Syed Ahmad retaliated spiritedly and was ably assisted by a group of loyal friends. A fierce controversy raged which may not have furthered Syed Ahmad's object, but which caused a deep stir in the still waters of the Muslim community.

Opinions differ as to the value of the contribution which *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* made to the fulfilment of Syed Ahmad's main object in life, but its usefulness in focussing attention on many measures of social reform and especially in shaping Urdu prose is less open to question. Hali called Syed Ahmad the "Father of Modern Urdu Literature". This is probably true only in a limited sense—as an indication of the formative and stimulating influence which Syed Ahmad exercised over four out of five "Pillars of Modern Urdu Literature"—but the contribution which *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* made, in making current a new style of Urdu prose, can be acknowledged much more readily. In 1870, when *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* appeared on the scene, the diction popular amongst the Urdu writers was the same artificial, rhyming prose which Syed Ahmad had used in *Asar-ul-Sanadid* and which could not possibly become a suitable vehicle of literary expression. It is true that in Ghalib's letters, published a year earlier, the rhyming prose had been abandoned, but Ghalib's range of subjects was limited and the few copies of his letters which were sold in one year could not

possibly revolutionise Urdu prose. Nobody can say that *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* was written in the style of Ghalib. The style, which Syed Ahmad used, was his own. It was the expression of his personality, in simplicity, in strength and in bareness—and during the seven years in which he used it for social, religious, political, economic, historical and literary themes, he gave Urdu a new prose which might be lacking in literary craftsmanship, but which was eminently suitable for satisfying the normal requirements of a modern language.

VI

Side by side with the publication of *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq*, Syed Ahmad Khan started work for the spread of modern education. On 26 December 1870, he organised, at Benares, a "Society for the Educational Progress of Indian Muslims," which, after inviting suggestions and considering them, decided to start a Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College. At first Syed Admad wanted to establish a University on the lines of Cambridge, but the Government of India opposed the move and ultimately a College was decided upon. Aligarh, where Syed Ahmad had spent several years as Sub-Judge, was selected as the venue. There was some difficulty in obtaining land for the College and both the Collector of the district and the provincial head of the Education Department opposed the proposal, but Sir John Strachey, the Governor of the province, overruled them and an extensive piece of land was granted to the College Foundation Committee. In June 1875, preparatory classes were opened and, in July 1876, Syed Ahmad retired from Government service and settled down at Aligarh. Here he started work with his characteristic energy and thoroughness and on 8 January 1877 the foundation-stone of the College was laid by Lord Lytton, the Viceroy of India.

The great dream of Syed Ahmad was taking tangible shape, but money had to be collected to establish and maintain an elaborate educational institution. Syed Ahmad had to employ every possible device to raise funds from running a lottery to the collection of money at a penny-reading performance. He toured

extensively for the purpose, and luckily his efforts were well rewarded. The religious circles, which objected to his unorthodox views as expressed in the pages of *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq*, were at first suspicious and critical about the College, but in 1877 all matters concerning the religious education of the boys were entrusted to a committee of orthodox Muslims, and so the fears of the orthodox were allayed. In 1879, Hali published his famous *Musaddas*, which, in a simple, appealing language, described the decay of the Muslims and contained appreciative references to the efforts of Syed Ahmad. This book—easily the most famous long poem in Urdu—had a profound effect in steadying Muslim opinion, and in general it can be said that, after 1880, Syed Ahmad's educational efforts had the general support of Muslim India. He had a most enthusiastic reception when he toured the Punjab in 1884, and the rulers of Patiala, Hyderabad and Bhopal made princely donations to the College.

Syed Ahmad received generous support from the Government of India and some enlightened European officers. Dr Hunter, in his book *The Indian Musalmans*, had ably brought out the sense of frustration and grievances from which the Indian Muslims were suffering and had made it clear that, unless they got their due share in administration and unless their education was adequately provided for, they would remain disgruntled and be a constant source of anxiety to the state. Syed Ahmad, who was a Wahabi, did not like Hunter's references to his own sect and crossed swords with him on some questions of Islamic law, but there is no doubt that the publication of Hunter's book considerably facilitated Syed Ahmad's task. It threw new light on the Muslim problem and made it clear that the state would gain nothing by maintaining its indifference or hostility to Muslim interests. Whatever be the causes, Syed Ahmad received powerful support from the Government of India, and many distinguished Englishmen made handsome personal donations to the College—including a gift of Rs 10,000 by Lord Northbrook, the Viceroy of India.

Aligarh College was mainly Syed Ahmad's own handiwork, but he was ably assisted by competent co-workers and the share of his son, Syed Mahmud, in the planning and management of

the institution was not a small one. Syed Mahmud had returned to India after a distinguished career at Cambridge and not only could he supply many details about the working of colleges in England, of which most members of the College Committee were ignorant, but he was also able to attract to the College many of his distinguished contemporaries at Cambridge. Syed Ahmad attached great importance to the question of the European staff, and wanted them, not only to assist him in the proper upbringing of the College boys, but also to help him in bridging the gulf which had grown between the British officers and the Muslims since the Revolt of 1857. The College was, indeed, lucky in many of its European members of the staff. Men like Theodore Beck, who died a premature death, it is said, mainly on account of overwork, Sir Walter Raleigh, the celebrated English critic, Mr (later Sir) Thomas Arnold, the author of *Preaching of Islam*, and others were not only distinguished teachers and able professors, but they took almost paternal interest in the welfare of their students, and worked like slaves to bring the College to the level of similar institutions in England.

When the foundations of the College had been firmly laid, Syed Ahmad's fertile brain thought of another means to promote education and social reforms amongst his people. He realised that one college could not serve the needs of seventy million Muslims and certainly could not be of any use to those who, for one reason or another, could not come to Aligarh. He, therefore, founded, in 1886, the Mohammadan Educational Conference, which held meetings in various cities of India and carried the message of Aligarh to all parts of the country.

The Conference, as its name implies, was concerned primarily with Muslim education. It kept a vigilant eye on the spread of modern education amongst Muslims, and passed resolutions and took steps to deal with the factors which were hindering its progress. But the Conference was much more than a gathering of Muslim educationalists. It was a powerful instrument of intellectual awakening and general spread of knowledge amongst the Muslims. It was able to attract orators like Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Dr Nazir Ahmad, and poets like Hali and Shibli, who

used the annual gatherings to engender enthusiasm for social reforms, modern education and general economic and intellectual progress.

The Conference was also, before the foundation of the Muslim League, the political mouthpiece of the Muslims, and Syed Ahmad's speech against Muslim participation in the Indian National Congress, with which we shall deal shortly, was delivered at the second annual session of the Mohammadan Educational Conference.

VII

By now Syed Ahmad was the undisputed leader of the Indian Muslims and a great national figure. In 1878, Lord Lytton nominated him on the Imperial Legislative Council, and his term of appointment was renewed by Lord Ripon, but after some time he resigned owing to his preoccupation with the affairs of the Aligarh College. Lord Ripon appointed him on the Education Commission, but he had to give this up too, his place being taken by his son, Justice Syed Mahmud. In 1887, Lord Dufferin appointed him on the Public Service Commission, and in the following year he was knighted.

Syed Ahmad used these opportunities for the welfare of not only his co-religionists but his countrymen at large. He was the first Indian to introduce a private bill which eventually found a place on the statute book. The Kazis Act and the Bill conferring powers for compulsory vaccination against smallpox were passed at his initiative. He also wished to introduce a Waqf bill, in a more comprehensive form than was subsequently adopted in Muhammad Ali Jinnah's Waqf Validating Act, but, owing to the opposition of the legal experts of the Government, he could not make much headway.

He was a member of the Council when the famous Ilbert Bill was introduced and in its support made a vigorous speech, which had been highly praised even by a thoroughgoing critic and political opponent like Abul Kalam Azad. Syed Ahmad and Kristo Dass Paul were the only two non-official members who

supported the Bill, which aimed at removing racial discrimination in Indian courts of law.

Syed Ahmad's efforts for the welfare of his country were not confined to the precincts of the Council hall. Whenever he saw that the interests of his countrymen were in danger or that they were not receiving a fair treatment, he came out with a powerful speech or an article, and his opinion could not be easily ignored. By then nearly half a century had passed since the introduction of English and a new class of people was rising, particularly in Bengal, which was trained in the political philosophy of Mill and Burke. They had begun to demand that administration in India should bear some relation to what was being advocated in England by political thinkers and parliamentarians. This frightened many Englishmen in India and they began to urge that the education of Indians on the basis of old Shastras and Sadi and Hafiz would cause less trouble.[32] In 1881, Lord Lytton delivered certain speeches in the Punjab which were calculated to support "Oriental Studies" at the expense of higher modern education and it was proposed to organise Punjab University as a Vernacular or Oriental University. Syed Ahmad, who saw in the modern education the main hope of the progress of his country and was extremely sensitive on this point, delivered speeches and wrote a series of articles against Government practising what he frankly characterised as a "fraud" on public. Ultimately, the original scheme of the Punjab University was abandoned and a University came into being which aimed at the encouragement of both modern and Oriental education.

Similarly, a few years later, Allan Octavian Hume, the founder of the Indian National Congress, advocated the foundation of a native Volunteer's Corps in India. This was opposed by Syed Ahmad's friend and biographer, General Graham, who, in a letter to *The Pioneer*, said : "There would not be many Europeans in the country, if Hume's advocacy of native Volunteers were successful." This immediately brought on him the wrath of his friend, Syed Ahmad, who wrote to him :

32. Many British administrators regretted the promotion of Western education introduced through the efforts of Macaulay. Sir Alfred Lyall's introduction to Valentine Chirol's *Indian Unrest* is most revealing on this point.

"I have perused your reply to Mr. Hume's letter advocating the Volunteering of the natives of India. In not allowing the natives to become Volunteers, the Government mean to say that they do not trust the natives of India. Its consequence should be judged from the saying, 'If you want us to trust you, you should also trust us.' There yet exists a wide gulf between Europeans and the natives of India, and unless it be filled up, nothing can secure and improve the prosperity of the country."[33]

Syed Ahmad was extremely sensitive on the question of Indo-European equality. He was a Mughul noble by birth and in his early childhood had seen his grandfather and General Ochterlony meet like best of friends and could not understand why Indians and Englishmen should not meet as equals. In 1867, when a big Durbar was held at Agra and the chairs of Indian guests were placed on a lower level than those of Europeans, he left the Durbar, although he was still in Government service. Till the very end of his life, he criticised all arrangements under which Indians were not treated on a footing of equality. Shortly before his death, he wrote, with great bitterness:

"In my opinion the time has not come yet, and perhaps will never come, when our European friends, conquerors of this country and naturally full of pride of their conquest, will condescend to sit on the same bench with a conquered and naturally hated Indian, who is desirous of performing his duties with equal honour and respect requisite to his high position. If the Indian wants to keep his self-respect as an honest and well-bred gentleman, his life becomes unbearable. . . .

"It is no secret that the treatment which English people accord to their own countrymen and that which they accord to Indians is as different from one another as black is from white."[34]

Professor Gurmukh Nihal Singh writes about Syed Ahmad Khan:

"As early as 1860 Sir Syed had advocated the inclusion of Indians in the Legislative Council in his famous book: 'Causes of the Indian Revolt'. In 1866, he was advocating the foundation of the British India Association—which has been described as the forerunner of the Congress and the speech that he delivered on the occasion was truly remarkable. He asked the people to give up fear and be manly, frank and honest and tell the British openly

33. Quoted in Graham, op. cit., pp. 229–30.

34. Quoted in *Eminent Mussalmans*, p. 35.

what their grievances were. He denounced the habit of fretting and brooding and condemning measures in their homes but of representing them as just and wise when they met Englishmen. 'Believe me,' he said, 'this moral cowardice is wrong. . . . Far better it would be to the interests of India to speak out openly and honestly their opinions as to the justice or otherwise of the acts of government.' In 1877 when Sir Surendranath Banerjea toured Northern India in connection with the Indian Civil Service agitation, Sir Syed Ahmad presided over the Aligarh meeting held in favour of holding simultaneous examinations. He also gave his hearty support to the Ilbert Bill and to the principle of equal justice to both English and Indians alike." [35]

These activities brought Syed Ahmad in the front rank of those national leaders who were trying to raise the status of their countrymen, and he fully co-operated, as far as his all-absorbing work at Aligarh permitted, with Surendranath Banerjea and other nationalist leaders of the country. He had, however, become primarily a Muslim leader, and kept a vigilant eye on Muslim interests. He was a true nationalist, but his nationalism was not of the *laissez-faire* type, under which the weak grow weaker and the strong become stronger. He was a great champion of Hindu-Muslim unity. He had a very large number of Hindu friends and colleagues, and he kept the doors of his College, established specially for the Muslims, wide open for other communities. Out of regard for Hindus, he prohibited slaughter of cows within the College precincts. But he felt that "justice" could not mean injustice to his own people and spoke fearlessly when the interests of the Muslims were threatened. In 1884, he toured the Punjab and was enthusiastically welcomed by both the Hindus and the Muslims. He delivered speeches, breathing a spirit of goodwill and unity, but he made it clear that it would be a poor India in which either only Hindus or only Muslims flourished and the other community was left far behind. His favourite simile was that of a bride, with two lustrous eyes. He said that the Hindus and the Muslims were two eyes of this bride—India. "Even if one eye is damaged, the beauty of the bride would suffer."

It was as a champion of the Muslim rights and the guide of Muslim opinion that, in December 1887, he delivered a speech

35. G.N. Singh, op. cit.

which altered the course of events in this country and caused no little misunderstanding in certain circles. At that time the Indian National Congress was two years old and had the support of all influential circles—including the Government. It was no secret that the man who had done most to bring it into existence was a former Secretary of Government of India, Allan Octavian Hume. The Congress had the blessings of the Viceroy, and, in those days, its plenary sessions were attended, as a measure of goodwill and encouragement, by the provincial governors and other high Government officials. As a matter of fact, the Congress and the high officials were working together so closely that at one stage the Congress leaders desired that the provincial governors should preside over its open sessions, and the proposal was not accepted by Government only as this might interfere with free expression of public opinion!

It was this popular body—at that time the darling of the high officials—which Syed Ahmad stood up to oppose. In a forceful speech, he advised his co-religionists to keep aloof from the Indian National Congress, and generally warned them against the inevitable results of its basic demands. He spoke, impromptu, in Urdu, but, in a long and somewhat rambling speech, he made two points crystal clear. One was that if higher services were to be filled after competitive examinations, they would all go to the community which had had a start in education, viz. the Bengalis. Secondly, if unadulterated democracy were to be introduced in this country, the Muslims will always be in a minority of one to four. On the second point, he said:

"The second demand of the National Congress is that the people should elect a section of the Viceroy's Council. They want to copy the English House of Lords and the House of Commons. The elected members are to be like members of the House of Commons. Now let us imagine the Viceroy's Council made in this manner. And let us suppose, first of all, that we have Universal Suffrage, as in America, and that all have votes. And let us also suppose that all the Mohammadan electors vote for a Mohammadan member and all Hindu electors for a Hindu member, and now count how many votes the Mohammadan member will have and how many the Hindu. It is certain that the Hindu member will have four times as many, because their population is four

times as numerous. Therefore, we can mathematically prove that there will be four votes of the Hindu to every one vote for the Mohammadan. And now how can the Mohammadan guard his interests? It will be like a game of dice, in which one man had four dice and the other only one!"

The effect of the speech was far-reaching and its reception differed in different quarters. A large majority of Muslims welcomed it, and generally kept aloof from the Congress. Others, however, who did not know—or did not wish to know—that there was a Muslim viewpoint on the Indian political question, were amazed at the speech. The Bengalis, of course, condemned it vehemently. Hume, who was a friend and admirer of Syed Ahmad, called it "sheer madness". Hume, however, was not the last English Liberal who, applying the Western doctrines to the East, was unable to see that the results of such experiments could be truly surprising!

It has been suggested recently that Syed Ahmad's policy towards the Congress and his attitude towards introduction of democratic institutions in India were inspired by the European staff of the Aligarh College. In their study of the communal problem in India, Messrs Asoka Mehta and Achyut Patwardhan say about Syed Ahmad:

"But by 1885, a sudden change came over this great man. . . . It was the subtle influence exercised over the aging leader by European principal of the Aligarh College that was responsible for the tragic change in Sir Syed Ahmad's politics. His trusting nature was cynically exploited to array him against Indian nationalism. He was misled into believing that while an Anglo-Muslim alliance would ameliorate the condition of the Muslim community, the nationalist alignment would lead them once again to sweat, toil and tears." [36]

As Theodore Beck was the only Principal of Aligarh College in Syed Ahmad's lifetime according to Messrs Mehta and Patwardhan, presumably he is to be regarded as the main instrument of Syed Ahmad's conversion. We shall later refer to the role played by Beck in organising and running Mohammadan Anglo-Oriental Defence Association of Upper India, which was started in December 1893 to safeguard Muslim interests in the face of an

36. Mehta and Patwardhan, op. cit., pp. 23–24.

anti-Muslim movement encouraged by Tilak after Hindu-Muslim riots of 1893. It is quite possible that, even prior to this, Syed Ahmad utilised Beck's services, as he very frequently did, in case of other members of the College staff, like Shibli, for assisting him in his work. There is, however, no evidence at all to support the thesis that the views expressed by Syed Ahmad in 1887 were either new or inspired by the European staff. In 1885, there was no "sudden change" over the "great man" and certainly none which was due to the manoeuvres of the European staff of the Aligarh College. Those who know the obstinate and self-willed nature of Syed Ahmad, which increased instead of diminishing with the years, will be amused at the suggestion that this so-called "great man" was so simple or weak as to surrender his judgment on a fundamental question of national policy to his paid employees, but there are enough external indications to show that what was said in 1887 was only the natural culmination of what Syed Ahmad had said or done many many years earlier. We have already referred to the gloomy forebodings to which he gave expression in 1867 while conversing with the Commissioner of Benares about the future of Hindu-Muslim relations—and the expression which he gave to the same views in a letter written three years later. The main efforts of Syed Ahmad Khan since the Revolt of 1857, and certainly since 1867, were directed to see that the Muslims were not left behind the sister community in a remorseless struggle for existence. When, as a member of the Legislative Council, he realised more clearly the implications of the democratic system of representation and saw, at close quarters, the temper and abilities of his Hindu colleagues, his fears increased. On 15 January 1883—full eleven months before Theodore Beck, his supposed mentor in new politics, set foot on Indian soil—while speaking on Lord Ripon's Local Self-Government Bill, he gave very clear expression to those views and arguments which he repeated while speaking of the goal of the Indian National Congress. He said:

"The system of representation by election means the representation of the views and interests of the majority of the population and in countries where the population is composed of one race and one creed, it is no doubt the best system that can be adopted. But, my Lord, in a country like India, where caste distinctions still flourish,

where there is no fusion of the various races, where religious distinctions are still violent, where education in its modern sense has not made an equal or proportionate progress among all the sections of the population, I am convinced that the introduction of the principle of election, pure and simple, for representation of various interests on the Local Boards and District Councils would be attended with evils of greater significance than purely economic considerations. So long as differences of race and creed and the distinctions of caste form an important element in the socio-political life of India, and influence her inhabitants in matters connected with the administration and welfare of the country at large, the system of election, pure and simple, cannot be safely adopted. The larger community would totally override the interests of the smaller community and the ignorant public would hold Government responsible for introducing measures which might make the differences of race and creed more violent than ever."[37]

It is quite conceivable that, in course of time, Theodore Beck played upon the fears expressed by Syed Ahmad before his arrival. It is certainly true that when the Bengalis, instead of trying to understand Muslim fears and to assuage them, poohpoohed all attempts at safeguarding Muslim interests and, as Hali records, opposed all petty safeguards accepted by the Government to redress the balance, which had formerly been tipped so heavily against the Muslims, Syed Ahmad became more deeply perturbed about the future of his people and began to turn more and more to an Anglo-Muslim alliance to save his community from completely going under. Syed Ahmad's opinion hardened further when, after the Hindu-Muslim riots, which broke out in Bombay in 1893, a general anti-Muslim movement started in various parts of the country. One of the forms, which this movement assumed, was an insistence on playing of music before mosques and the greater emphasis on celebrations, which included this amongst their programmes. On this point, it is interesting to read the report of the Sedition Committee, set up by the Government of India under the chairmanship of Jusice Rowlatt (1918) :

"Public Ganpati festvials appear to have arisen out of an anti-Mohammadan movement started after riots which broke out in the city of Bombay in 1893 between Hindus and Mohammadans. Agitators who were interested in widening the breach between

37. Quoted in *Eminent Mussalmans*, pp. 30–31.

these two communities encouraged the holding of public celebrations in honour of Ganpati, the elephant-headed god of wisdom and success, on a much larger scale than in previous years. The idea appears to have been to make the procession in which the god is carried to his final resting-place in the water as offensive as possible to Mohammadans. During the ten days' celebrations of the festival, bands of young men paraded the streets of Poona, singing verses calculated to intensify the feeling against Mohammadans and Government. . . . On one occasion the police came in conflict with a *mela* estimated at from fifty to seventy men which deliberately provoked disorder by passing in procession a mosque in which Mohammadan religious gathering was assembled."[38]

Another aspect of the new movement (which, as in case of Ganpati celebrations, had the powerful support of Tilak) was its violent opposition to the slaughter of cows. Cow-Protection Societies were organised in many parts of the country. Their activities were directed against both the Muslims and the Englishmen, but as the latter were too powerful to be touched, the Muslims had to bear the brunt of the agitation. There were Hindu-Muslim riots at several places, and at many more the Muslims, who refused to abide by the Hindu sentiment in favour of the cow, were subjected to a severe economic boycott.

This state of affairs intensified Syed Ahmad's fears. He began to wonder that if, under the British rule, the Hindus wished to exercise so much pressure against normal civic rights of the Muslims, what would be the state of affairs if the British left India and reins of Government passed into the hands of the majority community ! Beck, naturally, played on these fears, and on 30 December 1893, the Mohammadan Defence Association was organised at Aligarh. Syed Ahmad was now in his seventy-seventh year and, with his educational, religious and literary preoccupations, was able to give so little time to the new organisation that Hali in his voluminous biography makes no reference to it. No speech of Syed Ahmad, delivered at any meeting of the Mohammadan Defence Association, is included in the collection of his speeches. It is obvious that he devoted very little time to its activities. Beck, who was

38. *Report of the Sedition Committee*, p. 1.

the Secretary of the Mohammadan Defence Association, was its life and soul. Syed Ahmad, however, attended some of its meetings and from the limited part he took in its deliberations it is clear that he was full of grave apprehensions about the position to which the Muslims would be reduced after the departure of the British, and felt that consolidation of the British rule in India was in the interest of all minorities, particularly the Muslims.

Nobody who has lived to see the departure of the British and the actual fulfilment of Syed Ahmad's fears will blame him. In this, as in many other things, it appears that Syed Ahmad's only fault was that he saw farther than any other Muslim of his time. Certainly it is unfair to impute any dishonourable motives, and it is refreshing to turn to the words of Maulana Muhammad Ali who, from the presidential chair of the Indian National Congress, said:

"Reviewing the actions of a bygone generation, today, when it is easier to be wise after the event, I still think that the attitude of Syed Ahmad Khan was eminently wise, and much as I wish that some things which he had said should have been left unsaid, I am constrained to admit that no well-wisher of Musalmans, nor of India as a whole, could have followed a very different course in leading the Musalmans."

VIII

Hali in his biography of Syed Ahmad has called his life a model one. Syed Ahmad certainly had many outstanding qualities—energy, industry, moral courage, a dogged will, great capacity for absorbing knowledge from all quarters, political acumen of the highest order, a puckish sense of humour—without which he could not have achieved even a fraction of what he accomplished. He was a born leader of men, leonine in appearance and impressive in speech and during the half a century, for which he held sway over Muslim destinies in India, he influenced and brought to the forefront a larger number of capable men, than has been done by any other modern Muslim leader.

He, however, had a full share of the defects of his virtues and if we reflect on his habits and certain incidents of his life, in

many respects he appears a most dangerous "model" to follow. His method of work, for example, would kill a normal human being. He never slept for more than three or four hours, and if, owing to illness or any other cause, he could not get sleep at night, he would get up and start writing. Actually when he was writing his Commentary on the Quran, for some time he had completely given up going to bed. He would sit and work on the floor, surrounded by books, and tried to keep himself awake by drinking occasional cups of tea. When sleep completely overpowered him, he would take a book for a pillow, and sleep on the floor for an hour or so and again resume his work!

He was equally reckless in his disregard of appearances. He has been called the Father of Modern Urdu Literature, but, if so, he was the "most unliterary of men of letters". His motto was "Never mind the manner of writing. Look to matter, first and last." The result was that, except when he was under the influence of a deep emotion (as, for instance, when he wrote his famous letter to Hali on the publication of the *Musaddas* or when he poured out his sentiments on re-reading Muir's book), his writings lack finish and grace. Even his speeches, which he delivered under the stress of some emotion, usually make better reading than his written articles. The traditional attitude of Indo-Muslim writers towards verbal craftsmanship has been just the reverse of Syed Ahmad. With them "manner" has normally come before the "matter". In a community which has traditionally regarded painting as taboo (in spite of the admirable Mughul school of painting) and has left music in the hands of lower classes, it was natural that, for artistic self-expression, people should turn more and more to poetry and semi-poetic prose. Syed Ahmad had no patience with fine or even with well-planned writing, and the result is that, though in his lifetime he was able to brush aside tinselled cobwebs of imaginative writing, and allow bright, health-giving sunshine into the realms of Urdu prose, today his writings do not attract a large reading public.

He exhibited a similar want of consideration in dealing with human beings. He was a well-meaning, well-mannered Muslim of old Delhi school, extremely warm-hearted in his friendships. The

devotion he inspired among a large circle of friends may be judged from the success with which he was constantly able to draw on them for financial and other help for his numerous schemes of public service. But he was emphatically not one of those who, out of what is often termed "Oriental courtesy," keep up an appearance of friendship even when the true friendly feeling has departed. He called this hypocrisy and would have nothing to do with it. He acted on these occasions with an amazing brusquerie, and even a marked want of tact. In 1872, some highly-placed European officers, including the Collector of the district, opposed the efforts of the College Foundation Committee to obtain land for the College. Syed Ahmad would, thereafter, never invite them to the functions at the College and refused to have any private or social dealings with them.[39]

He once had a similar quarrel with the Lieutenant-Governor of the province. In 1869, Syed Ahmad, in the course of an article, passed "some strictures on the Government educational policy" and in reply to that Sir William Muir challenged the facts narrated by him. In the Urdu version of the Lieutenant-Governor's speech, which Syed Ahmad received in England, he appeared to have been accused of want of veracity. Syed Ahmad resented this deeply, and not only gave up correspondence with Sir William Muir, but, on his return to India, avoided all opportunities to meet him. Ultimately, the Lieutenant-Governor got the following letter written to him by his Private Secretary:

"My dear Sir,

"The Lieutenant-Governor desires me to say that he was glad to hear, from Raja Jykishen Dass, at Allygurh, of your safe return to India with one of your sons.

"His Honour has been looking for an account from you of your other son's progress, he being the Lieutenant-Governor's nominee for the North-West Provinces Scholarship.

"Sir William Muir will hope to hear about him and about your own welfare."

Syed Ahmad wrote back, referring to Muir's speech, and plainly hinted that there was no point in the Lieutenant-Governor's seeing him, if he was "deemed capable of telling an untruth". At

39. Hali, op. cit., p. 539.

this Sir William Muir immediately wrote a personal letter, making it clear that, although he still differed with Syed Ahmad about the inferences drawn by him, he could "never have dreamt of imputing to you anything approaching to a misstatement of facts".[40]

Syed Ahmad, as we have already stated, advocated loyalty towards the reigning government. Same is the policy of those who, on account of weakness of character or for selfish reasons of personal aggrandizement, can follow no other course. This has occasionally led to a misunderstanding of Syed Ahmad's political policy, but, as would be seen from an account of his career, Syed Ahmad was completely free from any timidity or personal avarice. His policy of loyalty was based entirely on reasons of national interest. It is interesting to read what a celebrated English critic wrote about Syed Ahmad's method of work. Sir Walter Raleigh, who knew Syed Ahmad during his early association with Aligarh College, wrote some years after his death to Sir Austen Chamberlain:

"I remember being struck in India by the close grip that Orientals have of the essentials of politics. My old chief, Sir Syed Ahmad (a great man, and a great politician), was a most potent diplomatist merely because he knew the value of an ungloved hand. He used to disconcert high officials by blurting out the essential at the very beginning of an interview. The diplomatist thinks that diplomacy is the art of coating pills with sugar!"[41]

Shibli, as we shall see in a later chapter, was a thoroughgoing opponent of Syed Ahmad's political policy, but even he admired Syed Ahmad's courage and strength of character. In the course of an Urdu article, he wrote in 1910:

"That powerful pen that could produce a book like *The Causes of the Indian Revolt* and produce it at a time when the country was yet under Martial Law; that brave man who, in opposition to the Punjab University Scheme, mercilessly shattered all the arguments of Lord Lytton, and expressed, in three articles, Indian demands in a language, unequalled in the entire Congress literature; that hero who walked out of the Agra Durbar because Indians and British were not treated alike in the matter of the

40. See Graham, op. cit., pp. 133–37.

41. *Letters of Sir Walter Raleigh*, I, 256.

seating arrangements; that fair-minded patriot who hailed the Bengalis as the prime of the country. . . ."[42]

Syed Ahmad was easily the ablest Indian Muslim of his day. He was essentially sound in his judgment, but he was trying to lead his people in educational, political, literary, religious and social matters, and it was not humanly possible for him to attain perfection in each sphere. What he was able to achieve is a marvel, and normally he gives very rare occasions for criticism, but in the very nature of things, he had to say or do things which, if he had had greater leisure to consider them more fully, he might have avoided. This very busy and preoccupied individual had occasionally to offer opinions without the fullest realisation of implications or to word them in a language which was capable of improvement. Where some of his firm convictions or pet fads were involved, the danger of stepping beyond the strict bounds of cautious statement naturally increased. While criticising Hunter's book, for example, he was possibly correct in challenging the accuracy of the author's legal conclusion, but forgot that the book was essentially a fair one and very ably brought out the hardships which the Muslims were suffering. Similarly, his love of higher education, sometimes, led him to an expression of opinion regarding the old system of education which was not always very happily worded. His objections to encouraging technical education, at the expense of higher literary education, have been cautiously worded, but even now they are capable of being misunderstood, and his criticism of small local schools or the old-fashioned *madrasas*, appears unfair to the generation, which is not really in touch with their working. Similarly, he may have been fully justified in holding that the first need of the community was to have a first-rate, well-equipped, modern educational institution, which could train up the future leaders of the people, but, in emphasising this, he sometimes overlooked the needs of the distant Muslims who could not afford higher education of the public school type or send their children to Aligarh.

Syed Ahmad was, as we have said, essentially wise in his views,

42. *Maqalat-i Shibli*, VIII, 155.

but towards the close of his life, in some matters, he developed a tendency towards extremism and a slightly exaggerated reliance on his views, which occasionally impaired the value of his judgment. The perseverance with which he continued his religious controversies is a glaring instance of how he persisted in the expression of his opinion, even at the risk of imperilling his main work in life. There is no doubt that his religious writings enormously increased his difficulties. His co-workers and friends, like Mohsin-ul-Mulk, advised him to give them up, in the interest of his work. But it would not have been Syed Ahmad, if, out of regard for any possible advantage to himself or to his mission, he had suppressed the expression of what he believed to be the truth. He has laid bare his soul, while writing to a friend of his, who advised him in the interests of his public activities, against expression of unpopular views:

"You may not be knowing, but I divide Wahabis [the strict Puritans of Islam] into three categories: (*a*) Wahabis, (*b*) bitter Wahabis and (*c*) thrice bitter Wahabis. I count myself in the third category, and, except for what I consider the expression of truth, I do not care a jot for anything else, and believe this to be the very first step towards Islam. . . .

"Satan, our enemy, deceives us, under the guise of virtue. We are asked to believe that we are performing noble deeds, and serving the public; and, now, if we utter an unpopular truth, people will be scared, and our noble work will suffer! This is, in reality, the deception of Satan, under the guise of virtue. To suppress or fight shy of the truth, and still to expect that virtue will flourish, is like sowing barley and expecting wheat to grow."

Syed Ahmad persisted in the expression of his unorthodox and unpopular views on religious questions. When the Aligarh College was established, he had agreed to hand over all religious affairs of the College to a committee of orthodox Muslims and had promised to have nothing to do with these matters himself. Under this arrangement, the spiritual side of the College was deprived of the support of a dynamic personality, but Syed Ahmad faithfully carried out the agreement. He not only left the management of the religious affairs of the College severely alone, but would not allow any of his controversial publications to fall into the hands of the College students. Outside the College, however, he did not give up

his activities. As a matter of fact, now, he embarked upon the most ambitious of his religious works—the Commentary on the Quran. During his controversy with Muir and, after reading the Christian literature on Islam, he had felt that if Islam was to appeal to Indian Muslims, even after they had received a modern education, a new interpretation of Islam reconciling it with the latest scientific theories was essential. He had spread modern education amongst Muslims, and he felt it was his duty to save them from any adverse effects this may have on their loyalty towards their religion.

A year after the foundation of the College, he started his Commentary. He devoted more of his time to this work, till, at length, seven bulky volumes were published, but he died before his task was finished. This book, even as it is, is a colossal monument of industry and scholarship. Syed Ahmad ransacked the entire literature of Islam to cull out authorities whose views supported his thesis, that there was nothing in the Quran which was incompatible with modern science. "The *word* of God (Quran)," he said, "must be in harmony with the *work* of God (Nature)." He followed the Mutazili method in conforming religion to science, and is regarded as the leader of modern Mutazilites. Some of his conclusions are open to criticism and whenever an assertion is made with regard to an ancient revealed religion, that it conforms in every respect to the latest scientific opinion, some far-fatched interpretations are inevitable, but the Commentary is a monumental work. Of course, it is possible to differ from the basic principle, that religion should conform to scientific knowledge, but if the need for proving Islam as fully compatible with all modern knowledge is accepted, Syed Ahmad would seem to have fulfilled this need as well as anyone else has done so far. To judge the stupendous nature of Syed Ahmad's work, it is only enough to compare his *Tafsir* with the celebrated *Al-Manar* Commentary on the Quran. Syed Ahmad wrote in Urdu, and hence his work is not so well known as the Arabic Commentary of the Egyptian scholars, but in ripe scholarship, close reasoning and soundness of judgment, it has not been excelled by the later publication.

In writing his Commentary, Syed Ahmad had shown scant

regard for the susceptibilities of the orthodox, but luckily it aroused much less active hostility than his *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq*. For one thing, his point of view was now generally known, and did not shock the public opinion as much as it did a few years back. He also was now a maturer and, if not a sadder, at least a wiser man. In the early days, when his views were criticised, he retaliated and so the fires of controversy were constantly fed. Now his attitude was different. He smiled at the severest possible criticism or even downright abuse, and disarmed opposition, or at least made it look ridiculous, by a puckish sense of humour.

Unluckily, it cannot be said that the object, to which Syed Ahmad devoted so much of energy and time, has been achieved. His Commentary may have provided adequate answers to the wavering or the sceptical, and some of his theories have been incorporated in their systems by modern sects, but it cannot be said that his views have found general currency, or that they have been adopted even by those Muslims who have received modern education. This is partly due to the revival of orthodox Islam under the influence of Abul Kalam Azad and Iqbal, but this must be partly attributed to the decline of real interest in religion.

Syed Ahmad's peculiarities of character, which were the overflow of an honest, straightforward, puritanical temperament, increased his difficulties, but he had to suffer many accidental misfortunes also. Of his two very able sons, one died prematurely, and the other—Syed Mahmud—had a nervous breakdown, from which he did not recover during the lifetime of his father, and died shortly after his death. Added to these domestic misfortunes were some serious difficulties connected with the College. In 1889, after certain instances of indiscipline by the College boarders, who were supported by some influential members of the College Committee, serious difficulties arose between the European members of the staff and those Committee members, and to assuage the fears of the European staff, which was supported by high Government officers, a new Trustee Bill had to be adopted. This resulted in a split amongst the supporters of the College, and caused no little pain and anxiety to Syed Ahmad. In 1895, an even bigger

misfortune fell. Shyam Behari Lal, the College accountant, by forging cheques and receipts, defrauded the College to the extent of a lakh of rupees.

Syed Ahmad was struggling courageously against these misfortunes when a development took place in the attitude of Indian Muslims towards Turkey, which caused him great anxiety. At that time the cloud that appeared on the horizon was no bigger than a hand, but Syed Ahmad, with his characteristic foresight, saw how it would grow, and tried to arrest its becoming a menace to the welfare of his people. He had greatly encouraged friendship between Turkey and Indian Muslims. Amongst the Muslim countries abroad, he saw in Turkey the only one from which Indian Muslims could learn something for modernising their life and improving their social habits. In the *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq*, he constantly published articles about Turkey. He was probably the first Indian Muslim to wear (what was at that time) the Turkish Fez, and he made it a part of the College uniform. But now Indian Muslims began to take an interest in Turkish affairs, which, without being of any material help to Turkey, might jeopardise their own future. Towards the end of his life, Gladstone, the Liberal Prime Minister of England, started a campaign against Turkey, which had important repercussions in India. The Indian Muslims looked upon the Armenian rebellion against the Turks and the war between Greece and Turkey as a revival of the old crusades against the Muslims. Many influential Muslims began to refer to the Turkish Caliph as the spiritual head of the Muslim world, like the Pope amongst the Roman Catholics. Syed Ahmad became uneasy. His personal sympathies were emphatically with the Turks, but he feared that this outburst of pro-Turkish feeling amongst Indian Muslims, without effectively helping the Turks, might complicate their relations with the British. Since the Revolt of 1857 he had worked assiduously to smooth out differences between the Indian Muslims and the British, and, after the rise of the Indian National Congress, had begun to rely more and more on an Anglo-Muslim alliance to save Muslims from being submerged by the sister community. This line of approach was being threatened by the new development. He, therefore, wrote a series

of articles denouncing the activities of Gladstone, and indicating on which side the sympathies of the Indian Muslims lay, but emphatically warned his Indian co-religionists against imputing religious motives to political warfare and allowing ineffective sympathy for the Turks to imperil their own welfare. He also made it clear that in their long history—and particularly under the Mughuls—the Indian Muslims had never regarded the Sultan of Turkey as their spiritual head and that they were under no religious obligations to him. Syed Ahmad not only used his own pen for this unpopular but, from practical point of view, sound piece of advice, but obtained the help of other scholars, and Shibli wrote a well-documented article in support of the thesis advanced by Syed Ahmad.

Syed Ahmad was now advancing in years and, apart from old age, the blows which he had suffered towards the end of his life, seriously affected his health. He, however, did not allow this to interfere with his activities. The casual way in which he refers in his letters even to serious illness is typical of the man. In March 1894, he wrote to a friend: "I have been lately somewhat ill. The action of my heart had slowed down and the circulation of blood was retarded. This led to a swelling of the feet and the thighs, but it was nothing more than a result of the slow action of the heart, and now. . . ."

A year later, Sir Abdul Qadir saw him at Shahjahanpur, where he was conducting the annual session of the Mohammadan Educational Conference :

"I was struck with his wonderful energy. Though he was then an old man of seventy-eight, he sat for more than six hours every day in the Conference, as its Secretary. He gave numerous interviews to its members and visitors in the hours preceding and following the sittings and, with the exception of the time of meals, he was busy from early morning till late at night, unruffled and majestic."

Hali, who saw him about this time, wrote in a letter to a friend :

"Sir Syed Ahmad Khan is slightly less than eighty, and has suffered many blows and sorrows, but from his activities and the arrangements he is making about the College, one would think that he is going to live for ever !"

Syed Ahmad's last years were clouded by personal tragedies, but his work for the College and his people continued right till the end. Eight days before his death, he employed his pen once again in support of Urdu, in the Hindi-Urdu controversy, which was lifting its head once again, and, shortly thereafter, commenced an article in vindication of the Prophet.

The end came suddenly. He fell ill on 24 March 1898, and passed away, two days later, with his favourite verses of the Quran on his lips.

IX

Syed Tufail Ahmad in a book, which is not remarkable for any partiality towards Syed Ahmad, says:

"The Indian Muslims realised their decay and downfall only about 1870, and this was the time when Syed Ahmad started his movement of reform. At that time the Indian Muslims realised for the first time that the responsibility for their progress and welfare, which was being formerly shouldered by the Muslim government, had now to be discharged by themselves, and their well-being in future would depend on their efforts. In short, Syed Ahmad's movement made them self-conscious, and they began to use their limited resources to regain their lost glory."[43]

Pannikar writes:

"Indeed, it could well be claimed for Syed Ahmad that not only had he arrested the disintegration of Islam but in the course of a generation had restored it to a position of great importance and undoubted influence."[44]

Choudhry Khaliquz-Zaman repeatedly refers to Syed Ahmad Khan as "Father of Muslim India,"[45] and "Father of Modern Muslim India" certainly he was.

Syed Ahmad filled a big void created in the life of the Muslim community by the disappearance of Muslim rule. But he did more. His long life, spanning almost a century, bridged the gulf between the medieval and the modern Islam in India. Himself a relic of the palmy days of the Great Mughuls, he ushered in a new era.

43. Syed Tufail Ahmad, op. cit., p. 1.
44. K.M. Pannikar, *A Survey of Indian History* (5th Ed.), p. 284.
45. Choudhry Khaliquz-Zaman, *Pathway to Pakistan*, pp. 226, 295.

He gave the Indian Muslims a new cohesion, a new political policy, a new educational programme, a new prose, a new approach to their individual and national problems, and built up an organisation which could carry on his work. Before him there was all disintegration and decay. He rallied together the Indian Muslims, and became the first prophet of their new nationhood. He could very well say about seventy million Muslims of India :

بجوئے بود راہ گم کردہ در دشت
ز آواز درایم کاروان شد !

[They were like a multitude, that had lost its bearings in the wilderness; I gave my clarion call, and lo, they became a compact caravan !]

Chapter 3

HALI

SYED Ahmad Khan's greatness consisted not only in what he was able to do himself, which in itself was remarkable, but perhaps even more so in what he was able to get others to achieve. Like a great leader of men, he inspired many worthy souls, and moulded and heightened their capabilities.

Amongst a distinguished set of people whom Syed Ahmad influenced, the noblest figure is perhaps that of Hali. He was born at Panipat in 1837, in a respectable but poor family. He left for Delhi for his education and received a limited and unsystematic schooling, but was able to attract the attention of Ghalib, the great Urdu poet, who became his master in the art of versification. After the Revolt of 1857, he was for some years in the service of Nawab Mustafa Khan, a friend of Ghalib, and himself a good poet and even better as a connoisseur of good poetry. In this literary atmosphere, Hali began to write Urdu poetry according to the old, conventional style, popular at the time, but when he became a sub-translator in the newly opened Government Book Department at Lahore, he was able to see, at least in translation, something of the freedom which the English poets enjoyed in selection of themes and their treatment. He, along with Muhammad Husain Azad, was one of the two pioneers who began experiments in "Natural Poetry" and started poetic symposiums at Lahore, where poems were read on given poetic themes, usually connected with Nature, instead of following the rhyme and metre of a given hemistich, which was the practice in the old poetic symposiums.

Hali was passing through this transitional period of his literary career when he came across Syed Ahmad Khan. In the new atmosphere at Lahore he had lost interest in the conventional erotic verse, popular at Lucknow and Delhi, but the "Natural

poetry," with which he and Azad had been experimenting, also lacked the glow of personal feeling, and was not a literary triumph. Syed Ahmad set him a task, which, while it perfectly suited the temperament and poetic genius of Hali, was also to demonstrate the possibility of the new school of poetry. Syed Ahmad asked him to write a poem on the rise and fall of Islam, and use his muse for awakening his people to a true appreciation of the tragedy which had overtaken them.

The result was the famous *Musaddas* of Hali, of which the first version was published in 1879. Hali sent the book to Syed Ahmad, at whose instance it had been written, and offered the copyright to the Aligarh College. Syed Ahmad replied in a letter, which has become a classic in Urdu literature:

"I am deeply thankful to you for suggesting that the copyright of the book should be got registered by the Aligarh College, but I do not want that the publication of this book, which mirrors the sad state of our people and is, really, an elegy on our downfall, should be subject to any restriction. The more it is printed and the wider its circulation, . . . the greater will be my pleasure."

About Hali's statement in the introduction of the poem, that Syed Ahmad had suggested its composition, that large-hearted friend and leader of men wrote:

"It is true I was the immediate cause of the composition of the poem, and I am so proud of this fact that when on the Day of Judgment, I shall be asked about good deeds performed by me in my earthly career, I shall say, 'Nothing, except that I got Hali to write his *Musaddas*!' "[1]

Hali's *Musaddas* is a long poem, and, in its final version, consists of 456 stanzas of six lines each. It is an account of the rise and fall of the Muslims, beginning with the condition of Arabia before the advent of Islam, the message of the Holy Prophet, the transformation it wrought in the moral and material condition of the Arabs, the achievements of Muslims in the heyday of their glory, a graphic picture of their present decadence, and, in the end, a message of hope and good cheer.

The *Musaddas* is avowedly a poem with a purpose. It was written with an object in view and some may turn up their noses

1. *Maktubat-i-Sir Syed*, p. 312. Translated from Urdu.

simply on that account. They will be, however, less than fair to the poem, because, although Hali started with an end in view, his deep feeling on the subject completely enveloped him, and, while reading the poem, the poet's original object is only dimly visible. As a matter of fact, very few people, who have read and re-read the *Musaddas*, but have not seen Syed Ahmad's letter to Hali, or very carefully read the introduction, are aware that it was written at the instance of Syed Ahmad Khan and with a certain objective. The poem is the outpouring of a soul in anguish, and not the didaction of a moralist.

The *Musaddas* was also a great literary triumph. It has its dull moments—and which long poem of the world has not?—but they are rare, and the reader moves from stanza to stanza, from the beginning to the end, without any loss of interest. The marvel is that all this effect is achieved without any rhetoric, any heightening of tone, or the usual poetic artifices. Even the expression of the poet's poignant grief is restrained, and well within the bounds of artistic requirements. The appeal of the poem is not only in its undercurrent of deep, infectious pathos, but in its literary beauty and the art that conceals art.

The *Musaddas* is no less remarkable for the beauty of its subject-matter. It depicts Islam in its noblest and most beautiful form. With such a universal religion, adopted by different people, interpreted in various forms, the conception of Islam must differ from man to man. But Hali's vision is easily the most soul-purifying and soul-edifying, which the Indian Muslim literature has ever known. There is no rigid dogma. No contempt of others. No emphasis on the formal. Throughout the poem there is a deep undercurrent of soul-purification, of rubbing the moral and spiritual edges, and of making oneself a beautiful instrument in the service of God. Hali's saintly vision will be treasured not only by the Muslims, but considered noble and beautiful by men of all faiths, and represents, in reality, that essence of morality and spiritual beauty which all noble souls of the world value. His picture of the mission of the Prophet, for example, will appeal not only to a Muslim but even to a lover of *Ahimsa*, and an advocate of the so-called "Christian virtues":

He, who won the title of "A Blessing among the Prophets,"
He, who fulfilled the desire of the indigent,
He, who helped the strangers in their distress,
He, who sympathised with the friend and the foe,
He was the shelter for the poor, and the protection for the weak.
He was the guardian of the orphans, and the champion of the slaves;

He was the forgiver of the wrongdoer,
He won a place, even in the hearts of his enemies,
He, who ended dissensions and calamities,
He, who united the warring tribes,
Came from the top of *Hira* towards his people,
And brought with him a wonder-working remedy [viz. Islam].

This noble and ennobling picture of the Prophet appears again and again in the *Musaddas*. Hali says towards the end of his poem:

O God, for the sake of the Prophet of Arabia,
Who was a friend of every human being,
He, who cared for all, the distant and the near,
He, to whom the Meccans, the Negroes and the Syrians were alike,
He, who put up with the mischief of the mischievous,
He, who wished well even to the evil-doer.

The main theme of the poem was the glorious rise and the tragic fall of Islam, and many passages on this subject have become deservedly famous. One of these is:

Let someone go and see the ruins of Cordova,
The arches and the doors of its magnificent mosques,
The mighty palaces of the Arab chiefs,
And their decayed pomp and grandeur.
The glory of their race shines from beneath the debris,
Just as pure gold glitters in a heap of ashes.

Another well-known passage is:

If there could be found a hillock so high,
Whose top might reveal the sight of the whole world;
If a knowing man climbs such a height,
And beholds the unfolded scene of the nature around;
He will then see such differences between the nations,
That the whole world will appear upside down to him.

He will behold a thousand gardens around him,
Many fresh and green, like the garden of Paradise;
Others less adorned, yet fresh and happy;
Others all sere and dry,
But though their plants bear no foliage or fruit,
Their saplings yet hold for them a promising future!

He will next behold a garden, all in ruins,
Which ever remains in the grip of the dust-storms,
Which has no sign of verdure anywhere,
Whose green branches have withered and are blighted,
Which is incapable of bearing fresh fruit or flower,
Whose dried stems are only fuel, fit to be burnt.

Where even the rain does the work of fire,
Where even the pearl-producing cloud produces floods,
Which is devastated more, the more it is looked after,
To which are congenial neither spring nor autumn,
A voice is constantly coming from there—
"This is the ruined garden of Islam."[2]

Hali reverts to this gloomy picture again and again. There is a quatrain of his:

In the desert, when I came upon a barren wilderness;
On which, even in rains, there was no trace of verdure,
Which the farmer had long ceased to have the heart to till,
I was reminded of the desolation of my own people!

There is a couplet of his, describing the sad lot of the Muslims:

They possess neither wealth, nor prestige, neither learning, nor art,
Faith alone remains—and that too is like a tree without leaves or flowers.

The success of the *Musaddas* was phenomenal. It took the Muslim India by storm. Its language was simple and readily understood by everybody. It was not marred by those religious controversies which had obscured, for many, the message of Syed Ahmad Khan. It was written with deep sincerity and great literary skill, and struck a responsive chord in the heart of every thoughtful Muslim. During the seven years which intervened between the first and the final version, the poem went through seven or eight

2. See Tahir Jamil, *Hali's Poetry—A Study*.

editions, and scores were yet to come. Its lines were on everybody's lips. Its extracts were taught in Muslim schools and recited in religious and educational gatherings. In recent years, the vigorous optimism and revivalist fervour of Iqbal has begun to replace, in popular favour, Hali's pathos and urge for self-purfication, but, for nearly half a century, the *Musaddas* held the centre of the stage. It became the Bible of the new movement, and in creating a widespread awakening amongst the Muslims, its contribution is next only to that of the Aligarh College and the Muslim Educational Conference. Maulvi Iqbal Ahmad writes in his incomplete biography of Shibli :

"Can any justice-loving person deny the fact that in popularising the message of Sir Syed, the bulky volumes of *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* could not achieve a fraction of what Hali's *Musaddas* did?

"What can be done by one effective verse,
Cannot be done by the thousands of soldiers!"

Hali wrote his *Musaddas* at the instance of Syed Ahmad, but his achievement was peculiarly his own. His poem was a great success, not because it embodied the Aligarh ideals in an artistic form, but because it was an expression of a beautiful and saintly personality. "In the circle of Sir Syed's friends and co-workers, which consisted of many distinguished and venerable people, Hali's character was the noblest and the highest." Khwajah Ghulam-us-Saqlain considered Hali a regular saint, and Syed Mahmud, when asked to name the human being he venerated most, referred to the author of the *Musaddas*. Hali belonged to that (unfortunately) dwindling circle of select Muslims who, brought up in the spiritual atmosphere of the old Islam, lived a truly beautiful and saintly life. Like the modern revivalists, they were not drunk with a sense of their own superiorty, but worked ceaselessly to make their lives pure, useful to others and full of inner harmony. Hali's character has been sketched by Maulvi Abdul Haq, who knew him at close quarters, and we see therein a man who had no thought of self, who felt deeply over the sufferings of others, who treated his enemies and critics with the utmost consideration—even tenderness —and whose nobility of character ultimately wore down the opposition of the foes.

It is doubtful whether during the last hundred years—or even since the days of Shah Wali Ullah—Muslim India has been subject to a nobler influence than that of Hali. He is really a link between the modern Muslim India and those venerable figures of the past who, like Khwajah Baqi Billah of Delhi, Nur Qutb-i Alam of Bengal, Baba Ahmad Khittu of Ahmedabad, and Hazrat Chiragh-i Dehli, have been the spiritual strength of Indian Islam, but who had not found literary expression of their longings and dreams.

This was the man who wrote the *Musaddas*, and his personality is enshrined, not only in his poetic masterpiece, but in his other works. Apart from his poetic achievements, Hali was a pioneer in Urdu literature, both in literary criticism and the modern art of biography, and in his prose books one sees the same fairness, balance and sweet reasonableness which may be expected from the author of the *Musaddas*. His "Life" of his literary master—Ghalib—is one of the most popular biographies in Urdu. In it Hali unveiled for the first time the greatness of a rich and lovable personality, and, as a critic has recently remarked, his book has contributed as much to the popularity of Ghalib as the poet's own works! Still nobody has ever alleged that Hali has been partial to his master and, as a matter of fact, if the encomiums of modern critics like Bijnori [3] or Mehar [4] are to be one's guide, one would think that Hali had under-estimated Ghalib!

Hali brought the same fair, balanced, comprehensive approach to literary criticism. Before him criticism in the modern sense hardly existed in Urdu. Either there was a collection of very superficial biographical details, or criticism was the hoarse voice of prejudice and partisanship. Even Muhammad Husain Azad, a much greater craftsman than Hali, had set no lofty example of objective criticism. To this plaything of the men of letters Hali brought a cool, balanced and disciplined mind. He never exaggerated the importance of his own predilections, he never ignored what was reasonable in the point of view of others, and the result is that, although nearly half a century has passed since he

3. In his *Mahasan-i Kalam-i Ghalib*.

4. In his *Ghalib*.

wrote his books, his writings still remain the highest watermark which literary criticism has attained in Urdu. He had no direct access to English, he never received that academic training which Bijnori or Latif received at the universities of the West but, by all accounts, his critical work is of a higher value than that of these distinguished products of modern education. Hali may have been ignorant of Western methods of literary critcism, but he brought a fair, understanding personality to his task, and gave Urdu literature a poise and balance by bequeathing a measure of this personality.

For Hali, Syed Ahmad was the main hope of the Muslim community, but he did not hesitate to differ from him when an occasion arose. Of this—and Hali's clear vision of things—the best example is his attitude towards women. Syed Ahmad was the pioneer, amongst Indian Muslims, of modern education amongst men, but he left the education of women severely alone. His view was that once the males received education, they would educate the females also. He even stated that the old semi-religious education which the girls received within their homes was good enough for them. Hali courageously differed from this view—even in his biography of Syed Ahmad—and held that the proper education of girls was as important as that of boys. He reverts to the same theme in "Chup Ki Dad," and, although towards the end of the poem he does not name Syed Ahmad, his complaint is obviously directed towards him.

But even more valuable than Hali's wise attitude to female education was his tender and ennobling conception of womanhood. Since the beginning of history, woman has had something of a raw deal in the East. In the ancient literatures of India, Persia and Arabia, and in the popular proverbs, which reveal the subconscious attitude of people towards various things, there is a deep-rooted contempt and hostility towards the female sex. Islam meant a very marked advance in human attitude towards women. It severely curtiled, if not abolished, polygamy, gave women right of property ownership (which they do not possess in many Western countries even today), and in his many sermons—including the last—the Holy Prophet advocated gentleness and fairplay

towards the fair sex. In spite of all this, it appears that the traditional attitude of the East has triumphed over Islamic teachings, and, as a French writer has observed, today the mental attitude of the Muslims towards women is more that of the pre-Islamic Arabs than of the Holy Prophet. It is, therefore, very much to the credit of Hali that he has overcome the traditional prejudices and his poetry breathes a spirit of tenderness and reverence for the fair sex. He has written many poems on the subject, but perhaps most typical of his attitude towards Indian womanhood are the opening verses of "Chup Ki Dad":

> O mothers, sisters, daughters! you are the adornment of the world.
> You bring life and joy to the habitations; you are the honour of the nation.
> You are the comfort of the husbands, you are the joy of the children.
> Without you the whole house is desolate: indeed you are the very life of a home.
> You bring sunshine to the invalid, you are the comfort of the workless.
> You are the rich wealth of the indigent, with you even poverty is enjoyable.
> Modesty is your very mould; fidelity and affection are your very nature.
> Patience and forbearance are ingrained in you; indeed, you are the soul of humanity.

Hali breathed a spirit of saintliness in our literature, but his title to pre-eminence rests on other grounds also. He was the first national poet of Muslim India. The very scheme of the *Musaddas* was based on the assumption that the Muslims were a separate entity, and Hali became their mouthpiece. He strengthened his claims to this title by writing many other poems, in which the main theme, in one form or another, is the decay of the Indian Muslims, and the poet's passionate desire for their uplift. He even wrote a long and moving poem "Shikwah-i Hind," in which, after recounting many gifts which Mother India had showered on the Muslims, he describes the sad plight in which they have now fallen:

> Whither has gone the superiority of the Muslims,
> In wealth, wisdom and learning?

Whither has gone that fixity of purpose,
That knew no barrier of land or sea?
Whither has gone that vigour and where are those strong sturdy arms?

The poet mildly reproaches India and her charms for the evil days on which the Indian Muslims have fallen and says:

Just as the army of Alexander marched back after reaching your border,
I wish we also had returned unsuccessful from your gates!

Some may recognise in these verses the voice of Muslim separatism, but none of Hali's contemporaries found fault with it. At that time the Indian nationalists had not adopted their later tactics of trying to solve the communal problem and evading the Muslim demands by ignoring them. At that time, Hindu leaders frankly recognised that Muslims were separate from them in several ways—for one thing orthodox Hindus regarded them as untouchable, and would not dine or intermarry with them —and had a perfect right to safeguard their individuality. A Hindu leader, as eminent as Gokhale, said: "If the Hindus had been in the same numerical minority, in which the Muslims find themselves today, they would have asked for the safeguards. It is the duty of the majority to understand and remove the reasonable fears of the minorities." The separate requirements of Muslims were so generally recognised that some Hindus assisted in the establishment of a separate Muslim College at Aligarh. Patiala and Vizagapatam are only two of the Hindu states which made handsome donations to the College funds. Syed Ahmad himself, till he opposed the Indian National Congress, was respected and liked by all progressive Hindus, and received most eulogistic addresses from them during his tours in the Punjab.

Besides, Hali's communalism was not only the result of circumstances accepted as natural and unavoidable by all concerned. His was also not that aggressive and self-reliant separatism with which India has become familiar since the days of Iqbal. His (and Syed Ahmad's) communalism was mainly defensive in nature and inspired by the worthiest and noblest of motives. The Muslims at that time were already segregated, separated from others by being completely left behind in the struggle for existence, and Syed

Ahmad's and Hali's efforts were to see that they were not completely ground down. They had no ill-will against their countrymen, no disrespect towards their religion and institutions; they never preached or even countenanced preaching of communal hatred, but the noblest part of their being surged them to rescue their community from the plight into which it had fallen.

Hali was the national poet of Indian Muslims, but there was no truer lover of Hindu-Muslim unity. He had scores of Hindu friends, and his relations with them were very cordial. He was by nature sweet and friendly, and wished well to all communities. He pleaded for Hindu-Muslim unity in all stages of his life. When he was at Lahore, he wrote a poem on "Patriotism," in which he says:

> If you desire the good of your country,
> Then do not consider any compatriot of yours as a
> stranger,
> Be he a Muslim or a Hindu,
> Be he a Buddhist, or a Brahmoo;
> Look on them all with the eyes of friendship;
> Consider them like the pupils of your eyes.

In his *Musaddas*, he preaches the same lesson of friendliness and goodwill:

> This was the first teaching of the Book of Guidance [the
> Quran],
> That all humanity is the family of God;
> He alone is the friend of the Lord
> Who is friendly to the Lord's creations.
> This alone is devotion; this is true religion and faith,
> That man should help his brother man.

In a later quatrain, he says:

> Let us not quarrel with the Hindu nor bear ill-will to the
> Geber,
> Let us shrink from doing harm, and in return for harm
> do good,
> Then, let those who say "This world is a Hell,"
> Only come and explore this Paradise!

Not only did Hali preach inter-communal harmony in his poetry but nobody worked harder to solve that problem, which marked the beginning of Hindu-Muslim disunity—the Urdu-Hindi controversy. We have referred to Syed Ahmad's grim prophecy

at the beginning of anti-Urdu movement in 1867. That far-seeing statesman knew the importance of language in building up common thoughts, in evolving a common literature and in keeping one section of the community informed about feelings, dreams and aspirations of the other. He at once realised that if India could not have a common language, it could not build up a common nationality. The population must split into the Urdu-speaking and the Hindi-speaking nations. The gulf widened after Syed Ahmad's death, but it must be said to Hali's credit that, both by example and precept, he tried to bridge it. He himself wrote a very simple form of Urdu, which would be easily intelligible to Hindus and Muslims alike. About his poem on "The Plaint of a Widow," Mahatma Gandhi has been quoted as saying, that if there could be a common language of this subcontinent, it would be the language used in the poem. Hali was constantly taunted by the critics for the free use he made of Hindi words in his writings. One of the critics, who wrote a *Musaddas* in reply to Hali's poem, says sarcastically: "He [Hali] will insist on bringing Hindi words into Urdu!"

Hali would have gladly taken this taunt as a compliment. Throughout his writings, he asked Urdu writers to study Hindi, if not Sanskrit. He writes in the Introduction to his *Diwan*:

"As is well known, the Urdu language is based on Hindi. All its verbs, prepositions, conjunctions and the greater part of nouns are derived from that language. . . . So the Urdu poet, who does not know the Hindi language and wants to drive his cart only with the help of Arabic and Persian, is like a cartman who wishes his carriage to reach the destination without any wheels."

At another place, he says that the only solution of Hindi-Urdu controversy was that the Hindus should use Urdu, which was really a developed form of Hindi, while Muslims should avoid unfamiliar Arabic and Persian words. He criticised the Muslims for neglecting Hindi and Sanskrit, and urged that the ideal at which both communities should aim at should be the simple, spoken language of Delhi, which was current amongst Hindus and Muslims and was the standard form of Urdu before it became ornate and artificial under the influence of Lucknow school of writers.

Hali was a fair-minded critic, but his verses did not always have the grace or finish of a Ghalib or an Iqbal. In poetry he aimed at simple, unsophisticated expression of feelings and cared little for literary embellishment. He, himself, has described his ideal in the following words:

> My Muse! if thou be not heart-entrancing, it does not matter;
> But, pity on thee if thou be not heart-melting.
> Though the whole world be spell-bound in allegiance to artifice,
> Courage, from thy own simplicity do not turn back!

When he was uplifted by a steady, inspiring vision, as in the *Musaddas* and some other poems, his ideal of versification gave good results. But he did not always maintain these heights, and even the supplement he added to the *Musaddas* is not of the same high order as the original poem. After the success of the *Musaddas* he yielded too readily to the temptation of using poetry as an instrument in the service of social reform, and some of his poems justly gave offence to the sophisticated sets of Lucknow. He had another, somewhat annoying, habit of putting the dullest verses in the beginning of his books, and they offer an easy target to those who wish to run down the author. Hali's works will gain by some pruning and omissions, but to those who do not wish poetry to be merely an artisic plaything of clever brains, Hali must make a deep appeal. He has his dull moments, and he makes no attempt to enliven them by the tricks of the trade, but generally he gives beautiful poetry of a high order.

Today Hali is not rated as highly as he was some thirty years ago.[5] The self-confident, optimistic note of Iqbal makes a vigorous appeal to the younger generation, who (alas!) do not seem to be fully alive to the value of the spiritual discipline and ennobling self-purification of Hali. Those, however, who realise the importance of these treasure him and at any rate the historic part which he played in the awakening of Muslim India in the nineteenth century cannot be forgotten. Iqbal ranked him along with Syed Ahmad Khan, amongst the Makers of Modern Muslim India. In

5. Written in 1945.

his Persian verses, written on the first centenary of Hali, he says:

The Tulip of the Desert [i.e. the Muslim nation]
encountered autumn and withered away.
Syed [Ahmad] gave it a new life, with the dew of his
morning tears,
And Hali did not cease his heart-warming melodies,
Until the bedewed Tulip had once again got its shining
spot.

Chapter 4

MOHSIN-UL-MULK
(1837–1907)

WHEN Syed Ahmad died, the ship of the Aligarh College was tossing unsteadily. The College was under a heavy debt and the income was not even enough to cover the current expenditure. Many a magnificent edifice, commenced by the large-hearted Syed was standing incomplete, and the office of the College Secretary was daily besieged by an army of masons, labourers and others, whose wages were in arrears. The collection of funds had greatly fallen since the fraud in the College funds, but now the institution was even failing to attract students. In 1895, there were 595 students on the rolls of the College; on 31 March 1898, i.e. four-days after the death of Syed Ahmad Khan, the number had fallen to 343. Syed Ahmad struggled boldly with these difficulties but his old age, failing health and domestic misfortunes impaired his efficiency and made it impossible for him to cope with them successfully. With his death the troubles multiplied. During his lifetime, Syed Ahmad had dominated the national scene like a Colossus, and there was a universal feeling that after his death his puny successors would not be able to carry on his work.

The administrative position was even more complicated. According to the Trustee Bill, Syed Mahmud, who was Joint Secretary, became, after the death of his father, Life Secretary of the College. His rapid physical and mental decline made it impossible for him to successfuly fill any post of responsibility, but his legal status was unassailable and anybody who displaced him would have to reckon with his active opposition. Syed Mahmud further increased his difficulties during the few days he was in office by quarrelling with almost everybody—including Beck, the all-powerful principal of the College. The relations of the European

staff and a section of the Trustees continued to be strained. Syed Ahmad had brought a Trustee Bill to deal with this problem and Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan, the original critic of the European staff, severed his connection with the College when this bill became law, but he left a valiant successor in Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk, and the difficulties continued.

The able administrator, who faced these difficulties and faced them so smoothly and successfully that people have all but forgotten this critical period in the history of the College, was Syed Mehdi Ali, generally known by his Hyderabad title "Mohsin-ul-Mulk". He belonged to an ancient family of Barah Syeds who played an important part in shaping the fortunes of the Mughul dynasty and was born at Etawah on 9 December 1887. Like Syed Ahmad, he was educated on old, orthodox lines and started life as a clerk on a monthly salary of Rs. 10! His intelligence and industry, however, overcame all initial obstacles, and when, in 1867, he competed for the Provincial Civil Service he headed the list of successful candidates, and was appointed a Deputy Collector in the United Provinces. As a civil servant he had a distinguished career and was picked up by Sir Salar Jang, the Prime Minister of Hyderabad, for a high appointment in the state. He spent nearly twenty-two years in the service of Hyderabad, and during this period, not only did he help in modernising the administrative machinery, but was also instrumental in gaining for the state an interest in the affairs of the Indian Muslims. In 1893, he was pensioned off from the state service; he settled at Aligarh, to resume his active co-operation with his old friend, Syed Ahmad, in the regeneration of the Indian Muslims.

On Syed Ahmad's death, Syed Mahmud worked as the Secretary of the College for some time, and after he had made a difficult situation even more difficult, the Trustees selected Mohsin-ul-Mulk for this crown of thorns. Never was a more satisfactory selection made. The measure of Mohsin-ul-Mulk's success as Secretary may be judged from the fact that, while there were 343 students in the College when Syed Ahmad died, the number had risen to 800 at the time of Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk's death nine years later. The half finished buildings were completed and new

ones taken in hand. The annual income of the College was doubled and a sum of nearly six lakhs of rupees was collected, in addition, to raise it to the level of a university. Besides, the College became a truly national institution. In Syed Ahmad's days, the *ulama* and the ultra-orthodox kept aloof from the College, but Mohsin-ul-Mulk won them over and many *ulama* visited the College and attended the annual sessions of the Educational Conference. The College was not only visited by the Prince of Wales—later King George V—but also by the Amir of Afghanistan, who after testing the boys in their knowledge of the Quran and Islam, declared that those who criticised the College for indifference to religion were all "liars".

The causes of Mohsin-ul-Mulk's success are to be found in his tact, industry, shrewd common sense and dedication to his work. He was more than sixty when he took over the reins of office but he worked harder than most young men do. He toured extensively—including a month which he spent at Rangoon—to carry the message of Aligarh to his co-religionists and neglected no device to make the College more popular and more influential. But the real secret of his success lay in his disarming temperament, and sweet, winning personality. His secretaryship after the tenure of that "thrice-bitter Wahabi" was like the blowing of a cool breeze after a stormy afternoon. Even in the old days of *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq*, while Syed Ahmad used to whip up enthusiasm —and even opposition !—for reform by his merciless criticism of his co-religionists, the tactful words of Mohsin-ul-Mulk applied balm to the wounds. He continued the same policy, when he became the Secretary of the College. Not only was he most considerate and tactful in matters of general policy, but was personally untiring in his efforts to work for others.

Syed Ahmad had made it a principle—most unusual for an Eastern—never to give anybody a letter of recommendation. Mohsin-ul-Mulk's line of action was just the reverse. His pen poured a constant stream of letters, to help not only the College boys in getting jobs but in enabling others—e.g. Shibli—to overcome their personal difficulties. About his work and temperament, Maulana Abdul Bari, a well-known religious leader, has written:

"We neither opposed nor supported Sir Syed actively. Our elders found themselves out of sympathy with his politics, even more than with his religious views, but, owing to his obstinacy, fortified by a strong self-confidence, he would not give up his views and there were occasions for difference of opinion. To remedy this, a peace-loving person of high sensibility like Mohsin-ul-Mulk was needed and, thank God, he succeeded Sir Syed."[1]

Not only did Mohsin-ul-Mulk bring the *ulama* nearer to Aligarh, but he was also able to win some known political opponents of the founder of the College. When Syed Ahmad was delivering his speech at Mohammadan Educational Conference against the Indian National Congress, the annual session of that body was being presided over by (later Justice) Badr-ud-Din Tyabji. Naturally Tyabji had no sympathy for the Aligarh school of politics, and there was a public controversy between him and Syed Ahmad over Muslim attitude towards the Indian National Congress. After Syed Ahmad's death, however, Mohsin-ul-Mulk met Tyabji in Bombay and so completely won him over that in 1903 he actually presided over the annual session of the Mohammadan Educational Conference. Tyabji became a warm supporter of the Aligarh movement and said in a speech delivered shortly before his death: "There is not a Musalman in India, certainly not in Bombay, who does not wish all prosperity and success to Aligarh."[2]

Mohsin-ul-Mulk was most peace-loving and accommodating of men, but by an irony of fate he had to take part in some active controversies and the first of these arose soon after he had taken charge of the College secretaryship. We have already referred to the revival of Hindi-Urdu controversy shortly before Syed Ahmad's death, and the efforts made by the dying statesman to help the cause of Urdu. The reason for the revival of this controversy was that Sir Antony Macdonnel had come as the Governor of the United Provinces, and as he was known to have been instrumental in displacing Urdu in Bihar, the supporters of Hindi hoped that he would repeat the performances here also. They

1. Quoted in M.A. Zuberi, *Tazkirah-i Mohsin*, p. 114.
2. Quoted in *Eminent Mussalmans*, p. 110.

were not to be altogether disappointed. On 18 April 1900, the Government of the United Provinces passed orders about the use of Hindi, which ended the position of privilege which Urdu had occupied in Government offices for three quarters of a century. This greatly shook the Indian Muslims. For them Urdu is a dear possession, next in importance to Islam alone, and, as Mahatma Gandhi was to find later, they react sharply to any efforts which undermine the importance of this language—"the main relic of Hindu-Muslim cultural co-operation".

Mohsin-ul-Mulk was Syed Ahmad's successor, and on him lay, he felt, the responsibility of urging the Muslim point of view. He, therefore, organised an Urdu Defence Association, and began to arrange protest meetings. The first meeting was held at Aligarh on 13 May, and was presided over by Nawab Lutf Ali of Chhattari. This enraged the all-powerful Governor. He wrote to Syed Mahmud, criticising the organisation and, as a result, Nawab Lutf Ali resigned from the presidentship of the Urdu Defence Association. Mohsin-ul-Mulk was, however, unperturbed. He organised another meeting at Lucknow, which was very well attended and showed unmistakably how strong the Muslim feeling was on this question.

This was too much for His Excellency, the Lieutenant-Governor. He rushed to Aligarh, called a meeting of the Trustees of the College and harangued them at length. He expressed his disapproval of what was being done and made it clear that if this public expression of views against his policy continued, the College would lose all assistance, financial and otherwise, which it was receiving from the Government.

His Excellency's attitude towards the Honorary Secretary of the College, personally, was even less worthy of a provincial Governor. When Mohsin-ul-Mulk, before holding the protest meetings, wanted to see him and explain the Muslim point of view on Urdu-Hindi question, he declined to meet him and told his Private Secretary to reply that the purpose could be better served by correspondence. He, however, later accused the Nawab of starting an agitation against a decision of Government without communicating the Muslim views in advance. He showed pettiness

even in addressing Mohsin-ul-Mulk. In 1887, the Governor-General in Council had officially recognised the title of "Mohsin-ul-Mulk," and had sanctioned its use in official correspondence between Maulvi Mehdi Ali and British officials. After that the Central and the Provincial Governments had constantly used the title in addressing Maulvi Mehdi Ali. Sir Antony Macdonnel, however, now forbade its use, and when his attention was drawn to the orders of the Governor-General in Council, he replied that the earlier sanction lapsed with the retirement of Mohsin-ul-Mulk from the service of the Nizam.

This was the state of affairs when Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk had to make a very bitter choice. It was obvious that if he continued the agitation in favour of Urdu, his continuance at the helm of the College would seriously affect its welfare. He had to choose between the honorary secretaryship of the College and an active movement against Government orders on Hindi-Urdu question. He thought over the matter and, eight days after the meeting at Lucknow, submitted his resignation from secretaryship.

He was not, however, allowed to follow the course he had chosen. When the news of his resignation became known, there was a widespread agitation, pressing him to withdraw the resignation. Hali and Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk wrote strong personal letters, and other co-workers of Syed Ahmad expressed similar views. (Sir) Muzammal Ullah Khan, the Joint Secretary, wrote that Mohsin-ul-Mulk's departure from the College at that stage would be its death, and made it clear that if he did not show any consideration to the public request for withdrawal of his resignaiion, he himself would resign from the joint secretaryship. Even Syed Mahmud, who had originally written a letter to the Governor adversely commenting on the agitation carried on by the College authorities, asked the Nawab to withdraw the resignation, and advised the Trustees to refuse to accept it.

Mohsin-ul-Mulk's hands were forced now. He had to bow to the pressure of his friends and co-workers, and he himself must have realised that with such a powerful "friend" of Muslim institutions as Sir Antony Macdonnel at the helm of provincial affairs, he would be exposing the College to grave risk, if he desert-

ed his post at that stage. He, therefore, withdrew his resignation and, as a natural corollary of that action, had to give up, for the time being, his efforts in the cause of Urdu.

Mohsin-ul-Mulk's withdrawal from the pro-Urdu front meant an early end of that movement, but it had important repercussions. It did not immediately bring to the ground the grand edifice of the pro-British policy which Syed Ahmad Khan had built after the efforts of a lifetime, but the building was badly shaken, and began to show big cracks. An essential condition for the success of Syed Ahmad's policy was that the Government should have due regard for the Muslim susceptibilities, but Sir Antony Macdonnel was oblivious of this. The decision on the Urdu-Hindi question, and particularly the high-handed manner in which the movement in favour of Urdu was suppressed, hurt all self-respecting Muslims and paved the way for the success of those who were opposed to Syed Ahmad's policy.

One important byproduct of this controversy was that Nawab Viqur-ul-Mulk, who, after his retirement from Hyderabad, had withdrawn himself to the seclusion of Amroha, re-emerged into activity and his influence in shaping Muslim affairs was just the reverse of what Sir Antony Macdonnel could have desired.

Mohsin-ul-Mulk also did not allow his love for Urdu to die out. When the angry heat of personal controversy had subsided and Sir Antony Macdonnel had left the province, he organised "Anjuman-i Taraqqi-i Urdu," as a wing of the Mohammadan Educational Conference. To guard against possible complications, (later Sir) Thomas Arnold was appointed its first chairman, and, though in the beginning its achievements were meagre, in the competent hands of Maulvi Abdul Haq, it became a magnificent organisation, not only for safeguarding the interest of the Urdu language, but also for orderly growth and enrichment of Urdu literature.

Six years after the Urdu-Hindi controversy, Mohsin-ul-Mulk took part in another controversial affair, and here his efforts were much more successful. We have already given Syed Ahmad's views on representation by election and his fears for the Muslims, if the system were introduced in India without any safeguards.

He had to rely on the nomination by Government to ensure that the minorities got a due share in administration. For the time being this served the purpose, but in the beginning of the twentieth century Liberal Government came into power in England, and it appeared inevitable that a system of election would be introduced in Indian Legislative Councils. Indian leaders like Gokhale, R.C. Dutt and others brought considerable pressure on the British Government, and the matter was discussed in Parliament and elsewhere. John Morley, while introducing the Indian budget in the House of Commons, referred to "the extension of the representative element in the Legislative Council". Viceroy Minto also, in a speech, gave an indication of the coming developments. Mohsin-ul-Mulk, who always kept himself well informed about these matters, decided to take action, and was urged by a number of other Muslims to do so. He wrote to Viqar-ul-Mulk in an Urdu letter, which is undated, but must have been written between 10 and 18 August 1906:

"Immediately on the receipt of your first letter, I addressed some selected people about the matter in question, and in particular, wrote to Archbold to inquire from the Viceroy as to whether he would receive a deputation for submission of the Muslim memorial."

The exact words of the Urdu letter, which give a complete lie to the story of the Simla Deputation being a "Command Performance," are:

"کہ وہ وائسرائے کا منشا دریافت کریں کہ مسلمانوں کا میموریل اگر
ڈیپوٹیشن لے کر آوے تو وہ اسے قبول کریں گے؟"[3]

Archbold, to whom a reference is made in the above letter, was the Principal of the Aligarh College, and was at that time spending his summer holidays at Simla. He contacted the Private Secretary to the Viceroy to get a reply to Mohsin-ul-Mulk's inquiry, and assured that officer of his own belief that the suggested deputation, while urging Muslim point of view, would not say anything disloyal. He communicated this to Mohsin-ul-Mulk at Bombay, and soon thereafter received from the Private Secretary

3. *Makatib* (viz. Urdu letters exchanged between Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Viqar-ul-Mulk), p. 95.

a letter communicating the Viceroy's consent to receive the deputation. Archbold wrote to Mohsin-ul-Mulk on 10 August 1906:

"As I told you in my previous letter, I explained the position to Colonel Dunlop-Smith [Private Secretary to the Viceroy] emphasising what I had to say in a subsequent letter. I assured him that I was certain that any address, that suggested Deputation might present, would contain nothing that was in any way disloyal and that I was also certain that the Mohammadans had no wish whatever to do anything that would cause difficulty to Government. At the same time, I explained the fears—reasonable fears—of the Mohammadans at the present time, to the best of my ability.

"Colonel Dunlop-Smith now writes to me to say that H.E. the Viceroy has decided to receive the Deputation of Mohammadans, if it is offered; and he asks me to say that a formal application must be sent in. He adds that a copy of the address, which is to be presented, must be sent to him, in the usual way, sometime before the date of the reception of the Deputation—at least two days, if possible." [4]

Originally, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk wanted that the formal application for the Deputation should be addressed by Muhammadan Political Association, Lucknow, of which Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk was to be the Secretary, but when it transpired that the Association had not yet come into existence, Mohsin-ul-Mulk took the entire work on himself. He wrote to (Sir) Syed Ali Imam of Patna, (later Justice) Shah Din of Lahore and Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk of Hyderabad to help him in drafting the memorial. Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk agreed and came to Bombay, where Mohsin-ul-Mulk was staying at that time, to assist him in drawing up the Muslim demands. The drafting of the memorial, which was very carefully done, took some time. Mohsin-ul-Mulk used to visit Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk at his Bombay residence every morning, and the two leaders would sit down and consider the various suggestions received from Muslim leaders, like Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk, for inclusion in the memorial. Archbold also sent some suggestions, but they appear to have been turned down. He was in favour of the deputation

4. See an extract from Archbold's original English letter published as appendix (No. 19) to *Tazkirah-i Mohsin* by M.A. Zuberi—viz. the Urdu biography of Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, pp. 13-14.

supporting the system of nomination, as in his opinion the time for introduction of election had not come, and Muslims would not get their due share under that system.[5] The memorial, however, as is well known, after pointing out Muslim difficulties did not oppose the system of election, but only pressed for the election of a suitable number of Muslim representatives through separate electorates.

Besides, Archbold seems to have sent a draft of a formal application, presumably for the interview with the Viceroy, which contained expressions conveying Muslim assurance of "aloofness from political agitation in the future". Mohsin-ul-Mulk wrote back to say that nobody would like those expressions and dropped a hint that Muslim leaders should have a political organisation. The relevant entry in Mohsin-ul-Mulk's letter, dated 18 August 1906, is as follows:

"Thanks for your letter of the fourteenth instant, together with a draft of the formal application. I am sending it to a few of my friends, but I am sure nobody will like the opening phrases which give an assurance of a deliberate aloofness from political agitation in the future. Probably also they will not like me to represent their cause to the Government without the means of a political organisation. I shall, however, let you know what is decided." [6]

The memorial, as finally drawn up by two of the wisest and maturest leaders of Muslim India, was a model of moderation, restraint and political acumen. It is probably the best-written political document ever submitted by the Indian Muslims, and was finally approved at a meeting of Muslim leaders held at Lucknow on 16 September, under the presidentship of (Sir) Abdul Rahim.

Next to the drafting of the memorial, the most important question was the selection of the personnel of the deputation. This Mohsin-ul-Mulk accomplished with his usual thoroughness and

5. The summary of Archbold's entire letter (dated 10 August 1908) as retranslated from Urdu and given on page 62 of *The Communal Triangle of India* by Ashoka Mehta and Achyut Patwardhan contains the following lines: "Personally I think it will be wise for the Muslims to support nomination, as time to experiment with elections has not yet come. In election it will be very difficult for the Muslims to secure their due share."

6. Quoted in S.R. Wasti, *Lord Minto and the Indian Nationalist Movement, 1905 to 1910*, Appendix V, p. 231.

sound judgment. He selected thirty-five names and made the deputation the most influential and the most representative body of the Muslims, which had yet taken up their cause. Apart from His Highness The Agh Khan, the leader of the deputation, and Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Hakim Ajmal Khan, (Sir) Ali Imam, (Sir) Muzammal Ullah Khan, (Sir) Rafi-ud-Din Ahmad, (Sir) Muhammad Shafi, (Sir) Abdul Rahim, (Justice) Shah Din and a number of other distinguished Muslims formed the deputation, and laid their case before the Viceroy on 1 October 1906.

The most important demand of the Deputation, as is well known, was for election of Muslim representatives to legislative councils and municipalities through separate electoral colleges, but it also asked for the employment of a due proportion of Muslims in Government service and appointment of Muslims to High Courts and Chief Courts. The Viceroy who, as is customary, had received an advance copy of the memorandum submitted by the deputation, gave a somewhat general but reassuring reply and undertook to safeguard the rights and interests of Muslims in any future constitutional changes.

The activities of Mohsin-ul-Mulk were adversely criticised by the pro-Congress press, and the communal electorates, which were introduced mainly as a result of the demand put forward by the Simla Deputation, have been a subject of keen controversy. No critic of separate electorates has, however, been able to suggest any effective alternative by which the interests of the minorities could be safeguarded in a country where the Hindus and the Muslims have been voting mainly for their co-religionists.

As a matter of fact, the experience of Muslims under the Indian Councils Act of 1892 had been so unhappy that those who have studied the question understand the Muslim fears. At pages 82, 107, 113 and 240 of his book on Indian Muslims, Ram Gopal admits this. He says:

"Ever since the growth of developments which led to the enactment of the Indian Councils Act of 1892, Muslim communalism had been growing slowly and steadily, and took a definite organised shape in 1906. Rightly did Muslims begin to entertain the fear that they could not get representation on the Councils even in proportion to their population, for the 1892

Councils gave them under-representation."[7]

Elsewhere he speaks of "the peculiar method of franchise, which left the Muslims practically unrepresented in the 1892 Councils".[8] It is interesting to recall that in early 'eighties at least one eminent Hindu politician (Rai Rajendra Lal Mitra, C.I.E.) visualised the possibility of separate Hindu and Muslim Panchayats.[9]

Actually the Simla Deputation by suggesting a procedure, under which the Muslims could secure genuine representation without clinging to the official nomination, facilitated the introduction of the system of election in India, and there is no wonder that leaders like Gokhale did not object to its basic proposals.

After the work of the deputation was over, Mohsin-ul-Mulk got busy with the organisation of a Muslim political organisation. Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk had been struggling with a scheme for four or five years, but owing to provincial and personal jealousies was unable to accomplish much. The success of the deputation, however, inspired new hopes, and it became essential, even to continue the work of the deputation, to have a permanent organisation. After some correspondence between Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk on the one hand and H.H. The Aga Khan and Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk on the other, a meeting of Muslim leaders was held on 30 December 1906, at Dacca, where the All-India Muslim Educational Conference was holding its annual sessions, and it was decided to organise the All-India Muslim League. [A group photograph of those who participated in the historic gathering appears as frontispiece to this book.] Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Viqar-ul-Mulk were appointed to draft its constitution. His Highness The Aga Khan was to be the permanent President. Mohsin-ul-Mulk was, however, unable to do more than preliminary spade-work for the League, as he passed away before its first formal session was held at Karachi.

The last days of Mohsin-ul-Mulk were embittered by the strained relations between the European staff and the College students, which culminated in a strike by the students. Luckily he

7. Ram Gopal, *Indian Muslims, A Political History, 1858–1947*, p. 107.
8. Ibid., p. 240.
9. Ibid., pp. 38–39.

was able to see the affair amicably settled, before his end came, but there is no doubt that it shook him badly. He was now well advanced in years, and a constitution which was never very robust was giving way. Towards the end of September, he left for Simla, where details about the proposed reforms and Muslim share in the new arrangements were under discussion. He met the Viceroy and carried on negotiations with other officers. This stay, however, at a high altitude was too much for a badly damaged heart and Mohsin-ul-Mulk fell seriously ill in the beginning of October. He passed away on 16 October 1907 at a place which was the scene of his greatest political triumph. He had expressed a desire to be buried in his family burial ground at Etawah, but the Trustees of the College rightly decided to ignore these wishes and he was laid to rest at Aligarh by the side of his former chief and co-worker.

Shortly after Mohsin-ul-Mulk died, the annual session of the Mohammadan Educational Conference was held at Karachi, with Hali in the chair. The death of the departed leader cast a gloom over the assembled delegates, but it was realised by all that by securing separate electorates for the Muslims, Mohsin-ul-Mulk had achieved something of a fundamental and far-reaching importance. In a short poem, Hali paid a tribute, which the late Nawab would have valued most, and which he deserved so richly:

وہ ملک کا محسن وہ مسلمانوں کا غمخوار
سر کرکے مہم قوم کے کام آ گیا آخر!

[He was a benefactor of the people, a friend of the Muslims.
He fell a martyr—but not before the battle had been won!]

Chapter 5

THE BEGINNINGS IN BENGAL

BENGAL was the province with the largest Muslim population, but perhaps nowhere else was the Muslim position worse in political, economic and educational spheres. This was the first province to fall under foreign domination and the new authority was not even that of a foreign government but of a commercial concern without any standards or rules and regulations of a civilised government. The Muslims suffered in particular, because, as explained by Pannikar, the events at Plassey were the outcome of a combination between the military strength of the East India Company and the financial support of the Jaggat Seths of Murshidabad. This Hindu-British alliance remained in operation to the detriment of the Muslims.[1]

The Ruin of Muslim Bengal. Pannikar has described the administration which Clive established in Bengal after the battle of Plassey (1757) as "robber State the one object of which was to extract as much as possible from the territories it was supposed to administer".[2] This state of affairs is supposed to have ended by the Regulating Act of 1773 but, if the situation is closely studied, it appears that for more than a whole century measures were taken systematically which would be a blot on any civilised administration and which ground down the vast bulk of Muslim population to abject poverty. The subject has been studied by Dr A.R. Mallik in his *British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal (1757–1856)*. The book is a most revealing study—especially the long chapter dealing with the economic conditions. It outlines the effects of the Permanent Settlement, how, in the words of James O'Kinealy, the new system "elevated the Hindu collectors who up to that time had held but unimportant posts, to the position of

1. K.M. Pannikar, *A Survey of Indian History* (5th Edn.), pp. 244–55 and 282.

2. Ibid., p. 246.

landholders, gave them a proprietary right in the soil and allowed them to accumulate wealth which would have gone to the Musalmans under their own rule." [3] Next, it deals with the Resumption proceedings, under which the grants made by the previous rulers to Muslims were systematically resumed. As an inducement to exertion, the Collectors were allowed 25% commissions on the first year's revenue of any plot thus recovered.[4] Special Deputy Collectors were appoined to carry out these operations, and a large number of cases were decided *ex parte*, in favour of the Government. One special Deputy Collector, Tayler of Burdwan, passed decision in 429 cases *ex parte* in one day. The junior Member of the Board of Revenue, commenting on the report of Chittagong Resumptions, stated that he was not surprised to see the *Lakhirajdars* of the place suspicious of Government's intentions. "Indeed it is no more than natural," wrote he, "that they should distrust Tribunals of Resumption, after the specimen they experienced in a file of 14,863 suits having one and all been decided in favour of Government and in their absence." [5] In 1838 the Directors of the East India Company realised "that great injustice" had been inflicted "by the extensive resumption of lands without due and, in many cases, without any investigation as to the right of the parties in possession".[6] But the proceedings did not close till 1852.

The new rules for appointment to posts under the Government also hit the Muslims adversely. Hasan Ispahani has recorded :

"Clive in one of his Gazettes made it mandatory that no Muslim shall be given an employment higher than that of a *Chaprasy* or a junior clerk." [7]

Dr Mallik has examined the list of candidates qualified for Government appointments, and found not a single Muslim name in the lists for the years 1845–1852 and again for 1853–1855. [8]

3. A.R. Mallik, *The British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal, 1757–1856*, p. 34.
4. Ibid., p. 36.
5. Ibid., p. 43.
6. Ibid., p. 45.
7. M.A.H. Ispahani, *Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah—As I Knew Him*, p. 13.
8. Mallik, op. cit., p. 49.

Next, he describes what the lower class, viz. the peasants and the weavers, had to suffer. Indigo plantation was extensive in Muslim areas and as a high proportion of Muslim population consisted of cultivators, the evils connected with indigo plantation were the fate of a large number of Muslims. The position of the weavers who constituted the other major section of the Muslims was equally bad. The agents of the East India Company forced the weavers to sign bonds to supply goods within a specified time and the prices paid were 15% or even 40% less than the market rate. Later, to encourage the British manufactures, the East India Company adopted a policy of discouraging finished products from India and the value of goods for export, manufactured at Dacca alone, fell from Rs. 12 lakhs in 1799 to only Rs. 3½ lakhs in 1813. This decline continued and by 1894 the manufacture of muslin, for which Bengal was famous, had practically ceased.[9]

Another modern historian has studied the relationship between the Hindus and the Muslims of Bengal in the nineteenth century. Dr R.C. Majumdar has contested the view "that the Hindus and Muslims had coalesced into an Indian people". He records that the vernacular newspapers of the early nineteenth century referred to Muslims as "*Yavana Jati*" and made a clear distinction between them and the Hindus. He has detailed the differences separating the two communities and as his remarks apply to other areas also, a long quotation may not be out of place:

"A fundamental and basic difference between the two communities was apparent even to a casual observer. Religious and social ideas and institutions counted far more in men's lives in those days than anything else; and in these two respects the two differed as poles asunder. The worship of images which formed the most cherished element in the religious beliefs of the Hindus was an anathema in the eyes of the Muslims and the long tradition of ruthless desecration of temples by them for nearly a thousand years formed a wide gulf between the two. The method of congregational prayer by the Muslims was a thing unknown to the Hindus, and the ceremonial worship of the Hindus to the

9. Ibid., p. 58.

accompaniment of music, both vocal and instrumental, was not only alien to the Muslims but positively distasteful and irksome to them. The temples and mosques were built in purely Hindu and Muslim styles and were not influenced by each other to the least degree. As regards social institutions, the caste-ridden Hindu society was an enigma to the Muslims, while the food of the latter, particularly beef and onion, was looked upon with aversion by the Hindus. Other customs like *Sati* and untouchability among the Hindus and widow-marriage and marriage between first cousins among the Muslims, as well as those of lesser importance like the funeral ceremonies, dress, etc., created a permanent cleavage between the two. The literary and intellectual tradition of the two communities ran on entirely different lines, and they were educated in different institutions, *Tols* and *Madrasas*. The Muslims drew their inspiration from Quran and Arabic and Persian literature. A number of Hindus knew Persian, and a few learnt Arabic, but the Hindu mind was nurtured from the boyhood on Sanskrit, particularly religious literature like the Epics and the Puranas. It is a strange phenomenon that although the Muslims and Hindus had lived together in Bengal for nearly six hundred years, the average people of each community knew so little of the other's traditions." [10]

Dr Majumdar goes on to say that the Hindus treated the Muslim masses like the low caste of their own society:

"The Hindus believed that the majority of the Muslims in Bengal were converts from the lowest strata of Hindu society. How far this belief was historically correct need not be discussed in the present context. But the belief was there, and there is no doubt that the upper class Hindus treated the Muslim masses like the low castes of their own society." [11]

It was quite customary in those days for Bengali Hindu leaders to attribute all their misfortunes to the Muslim rule. A quotation from Dwarkanath Tagore, by no means a bigoted Hindu, would suffice:

"The present characteristic failings of natives are a want of truth, a want of integrity, a want of independence. These were not the characteristics of former days, before the religion was corrupted and education had disappeared. It is to the Mahomedan conquest that these evils are owing, and they are the invariable

10. R.C. Majumdar, *The Glimpses of Bengal in the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 5–6. 11. Ibid., p. 6.

results of the loss of liberty and national degradation. The Mahomedans introduced in this country all the vices of an ignorant, intolerant and licentious soldiery. The utter destruction of learning and science was an invariable part of their system, and the conquered, no longer able to protect their lives by arms and independence, fell into opposite extremes of abject submission, deceit and fraud. Such has been the condition of the natives of Hindustan for centuries." [12]

These comments shed a lurid light on the relations between the Hindus and the Muslims of Bengal in the nineteenth century. Dr Majumdar also gives some revealing details about the Muslim position in respect of modern education. He says that, although an English class was established in the Calcutta Madrasa as early as 1826, only two students passed the junior scholarship examination during the next twenty-five years. He goes on to say:

"The comparative position of the Hindus and Muslims in English education will be evident from some figures quoted in the *Amritabazar Patrika* of August 12, 1869, from the Education Reports of the years 1865 and 1867. In 1865, 9 Hindus and no Muhammadan passed the M.A. Examination, 41 Hindus and 1 Muhammadan passed the B.A., and 17 students, all Hindus, passed the Law Examination. All the Medical graduates were also Hindus. In 1867, 88 Hindus, and not a single Muhammadan, passed the M.A. and B.A. Examinations." [13]

Haji Muhammad Mohsin (1730–1812). The history of the Muslims of Bengal in the nineteenth century is one of the darkest chapters of the history of the subcontinent, but there were some glimmers of light even during this period. One venerable personality, whose figure shines like a beacon of light, was that of Haji Muhammad Mohsin, after whom the famous Mohsin Fund of Bengal was named. He was born in 1730 at Hugli in a family of Irani business men and in 1803 became the sole heir of the large property bequeathed by his step-sister, Manno Jan Khanum. Three years later, after retaining enough property to bring him a monthly income of Rs. 100, he endowed his entire estate, which even in those days brought an annual income of Rs. 45,000, as a Waqf. Mohsin Waqf was registered on 28 Apil 1806 and, six

12. Quoted in ibid., p. 20.   13. Ibid., p. 50.

years later, Haji Muhammad Mohsin died at the ripe age of eighty-two. After him the Waqf was mismanaged and was taken over by the Board of Revenue. The Government, however, diverted its income to general education and established Hugli College in 1836 with the help of funds coming largely from Mohsin Fund. For thirty-seven years the Fund was used for a purpose from which the main beneficiaries were non-Muslims, but in 1873, thanks to efforts of Sir William Hunter, Nawab Abdul Latif and others, money became available for the Muslims. In that year it was decided that Government itself would pay for the maintenance of Hugli College, while the income from the Mohsin Fund would be spent on establishing *Madrasas* at Dacca, Chittagong, Rajshahi, and part of the funds would be reserved for modern education of Bengal Muslims. The Government, now, made arrangements under which two-thirds of the fees of any Muslim student studying in any modern school or college of Bengal were paid out of the Mohsin Fund.

Nawab Abdul Latif (1828–1893). The next prominent name among Muslims of modern Bengal is that of Nawab Abdul Latif, C.I.E. He belonged to an old family of Qazis in what is now Faridur District. His father compiled a book in Persian on universal history (entitled *Jami-ut-Tawarikh*) which was repeatedly lithographed at Lucknow. His brother, Maulvi Abdul Ghaffar Nassakh (Deputy Collector) was a well-known Urdu poet and the author of a number of books in prose, including two biographical works on Urdu and Persian poets which contain some interesting information about literary figures of contemporary Bengal.

Young Abdul Latif received his higher education at Calcutta Madrasa, but also learnt English from a missionary. After holding some miscellaneous appointments, including that of Private Secretary to one of the exiled Amirs of Sind, who were political prisoners at Calcutta, he became a Deputy Magistrate in 1849, and continued in the provincial civil service till his retirement in 1887. In the meanwhile he had been associated with the Bengal Legislative Council, to which he was nominated in 1862, being the first Muslim to be appointed its member. He was nominated for two more terms, in 1866 and 1872. In this capacity, he was asso-

ciated with many legislative measures, and rendered useful service in stopping the mismanagement of Mohsin Fund, which was being largely used for giving stipends to Hindu students of the Hugli College. In 1863 he started Muhammadan Literary Society at Calcutta. It included distinguished scholars and noblemen amongst its members and received official patronage. Some interesting papers were read before the Society—like Syed Ahmad Khan's lecture (delivered in Persian) on the spread of education, and Maulvi Karamat Ali Jaunpuri's lecture on the controversy relating to India being a *Dar-ul-Harb*—but, unlike the Aligarh movement, the Society had no Hali to carry its message to the masses, and remained practically a literary club for the elite. What was even more unfortunate was that Abdul Latif and his colleagues opposed and criticised other leaders, like Ameer Ali, working for the uplift of the Muslims. The Nawab belonged to a world which was changing fast, but he deserves to be remembered, not only on account of what he achieved himself, but also because of his illustrious family. A list of his descendants and their spouses makes a veritable "Who's who" of modern Muslim Bengal. One of his grand-daughters married A.K. Fazl-ul-Haq. Another was married to Sir Hasan Suhrawardy, a member of another illustrious family of Muslim Bengal and the father of Begum Shaistah Ikramullah, the talented wife of the first Foreign Secretary of Pakistan.

Numerical Expansion of Islam. When Nawab Abdul Latif started his Literary Society in the metropolis, far-reaching developments were taking place in eastern parts of the province. In the first half of the century, this area had been the scene of the activities of the Faraizi leaders, Haji Shariat Ullah (1781–1840) and his son Dudu Mian (1819–1862) and some very dedicated disciples of Maulana Sayyid Ahmad Brelvi—like Maulvi Inayat Ali of Patna (1800–1858), Maulvi Imam Din of Noakhali and Sufi Nur Muhammad of Chittagong. Their activities led to a great revival of Islam, resulting, not only in discarding of Hindu practices prevalent among the peasantry, but also in adoption of a self-assertive attitude towards Hindu landlords and a rebellious attitude towards the British government. The eastern and central districts of Bengal were the main recruiting ground for *Jihad* against the Sikhs and

later against the British. With the adpotion of severe measures against these activities following the "Wahabi" Conspiracy cases at Patna (1865), Malda (1870), Rajmahal (1870) and elsewhere, as well as propagation of a moderate approach by preachers like Maulvi Karamat Ali (d. 1873) and his son and certain ameliorative steps taken by the government, the anti-British activities weakened and less dramatic, but basically more important, developments took place in the area. Ram Gopal, who, following Hunter, calls the religious workers in Bengal "Wahabis" (although mostly they represented the offshoot of the reform movement started by Shah Wali Ullah), says:

"The abandonment of that (rebellious) movement in the early seventies quickened the pace of conversion, because the Wahabis were now in a position to devote exclusive attention to the spread of Islam." [14]

The results of the new efforts can best be summarised in the words of O'Donnell, who wrote the Census Report for the area in 1891:

"It is satisfactorily proved that since 1872 out of every 10,000 persons, Islam has gained 100 persons in Northern Bengal, 262 in Eastern Bengal, and 110 in Western Bengal—on an average 157 in the whole of Bengal proper. The Mussalman increase is real and large. If it were to continue, the faith of Muhammad would be universal in Bengal proper in six and a half centuries, whilst Eastern Bengal would reach the same condition in about four hundred years. . . . Nineteen years ago in Bengal proper Hindus numbered nearly half a million more than Mussalmans did, and in the space of less than two decades the Mussalmans have not only overtaken the Hindus, but have surpassed them by a million and a half." [15]

Syed Ameer Ali (1849–1928). Much more important and active than the Muhammadan Literary Society was the Central National Muhammadan Association, which was started by that great author, jurist and man-of-affairs, Syed Ameer Ali, at Calcutta. Syed Ameer Ali was born on 6 April 1849 at Chinsurah, the former Dutch settlement on the banks of Hugli. A brilliant student throughout his educational career, he received help from the famous Mohsin Fund and some years later was sent to England

14. Ram Gopal, *Indian Muslims, A Political History, 1858–1947*, p. 9.
15. Quoted in ibid., pp. 8–9.

as a state scholar by the Government of India. He studied law and was called to the bar in 1873. On return to Calcutta he started legal practice and soon made a name for himself. In 1874, he was elected a Fellow of the Calcutta University, and next year became Lecturer on Muhammadan Law at the Presidency College. In 1878, he was appointed Presidency Magistrate, but resigned the post three years later, to resume legal practice. In 1890, he became a Judge of the Calcutta High Court, the second Muslim to be selected for such a high judicial appointment, the first being Syed Mahmud, son of Syed Ahmad Khan. In 1904, he retired after fourteen years' service and settled in England to devote himself to the service of his people in literary and political fields. In 1909, he became a Privy Councillor, the first Indian to achieve the signal honour.

Today the world knows Syed Ameer Ali primarily as the renowned author of *The Spirit of Islam*[16] and *A Short History of the Saracens*, but his services to his people in the political sphere were also noteworthy. In England, he was Muslim India's vigilant, active and resourceful champion. Even in India he had worked hard to organise them, and for this purpose started the Central National Muhammadan Association in 1877. He tried to enlist the support of Syed Ahmad Khan, but the latter wished to concentrate on education and believed politics to be a dangerous game at that stage of national life. Without a band of workers, whom Syed Ahmad was able to attract, and perhaps lacking his capacity for leadership, Ameer Ali did not achieve all the success he deserved, but he worked hard and systematically. He organised the branches of the Association at various places, but could not kindle general enthusiasm for his cause. Still, the organisation has many notable achievements to its credit. In 1882, the Association submitted a comprehensive memorial to Lord Ripon, describing in detail the condition of the Muslims and seeking remedial measures. About this memorial, and the reply received from

16. A Western scholar who collected figures in the course of a survey of modern Arablic literature found that in Muslim Egypt "*Spirit of Islam* is the most widely quoted modern book on religion" (W.C. Smith, *Modern Islam in India*, p. 56).

Lord Ripon's successor, it has been said that "prior to Lord Minto's memorable reply to the Mohammadan deputation which waited on him at Simla on 1st October, 1906, the most important declaration of policy emanating from the head of the Indian Government in regard to Muslims was the notable resolution issued by Lord Dufferin on the memorial of Central National Mohammadan Association." The Association which had thirteen branches in 1885 was able to build up, in the course of next three years, fifty-three branches in various parts of the subcontinent, but general enthusiasm was lacking, and, after Ameer Ali's departure for England in 1904, it gradually ceased to function.

In spite of his differences with Syed Ahmad Khan regarding the need for a political organisation, Ameer Ali co-operated with Aligarh leaders, and presided over the thirteenth session of All-India Muslim Educational Conference, held at Calcutta in 1899. This co-operation became more fruitful after All-India Muslim League was formed, and Ameer Ali established an active branch in London. This branch which was organised as early as 6 May 1908 had Ameer Ali as its President, while the Committee included Dr Iqbal, Dr Ansari and some other young Muslims who were in England for their education. The part Ameer Ali played in holding the British government to Lord Minto's promise regarding separate electorate will be dealt with elsewhere. After an active, distinguished and fruitful career he passed away in 1928.

Nawab Salim Ullah. The Muslims in Bengal became politically more conscious when Bengal was partitioned by Lord Curzon, and the Hindus started a vigorous agitation to undo the measure. The setting up of the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam, where Muslims would be in the majority, stirred hopes and a new political life started in which the central figure was that of Nawab Sir Salim Ullah Khan of Dacca. Born in 1884,[17] he was a scion of the Dacca Nawab family which was known for its philanthropy and had made solid contribution to the civic amenities of Dacca. His grandfather, Sir Abdul Ghani, had paid for the Dacca Water Works, while his father, Sir Ahsan Ullah, provided funds for

17. Based on Fauq, *Mashahir-i Kashmir*, p. 154.

fitting streets and roads of the city with electric lights. On the death of his father in 1901, he succeeded to his father's estate and received the title of *Nawab Bahadur* in 1903. As a young man he was greatly interested in *Milad* gatherings, holding them in each Mohallah of Dacca, and himself reciting *Na'ts* at some of them. He also maintained his family's tradition of philanthropic work. Soon political activity in a larger sphere attracted him.

As heir to the premier Muslim Zamindari in East Bengal, Nawab Salim Ullah held a very important position which increased in importance after Dacca became the capital of Eastern Bengal and Assam. The agitation against the new province brought the Nawab in the centre of events. He could not join Simla Deputation owing to illness, but soon thereafter extended a personal invitation to Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk to hold the next session of the All-India Musilm Educational Conference at Dacca. Hitherto, except for a session of the Conference held at Calcutta, then capital of India, Bengal had largely remained outside the orbit of the Aligarh movement. The Nawab's invitation brought Aligarh leadership to the heart of Muslim Bengal, and a session was held, which marked a turning point in the history of the subcontinent. Before the Conference was held the Nawab circulated among the delegates a scheme for "the Muslim All-India Confederacy," suggesting the formation of a political organisation for protecting and promulgating the Muslim cause. The elaborate arrangements which the Nawab made for the ensuing Conference, which was held at Dacca in the last week of 1906, were long remembered by the participants. It also became a landmark in the history of Muslim India. After the Conference, the delegates met on 30 December 1906 to consider the Nawab's scheme, and decided to form the All-India Muslim League. The Nawab explained his scheme, and moved the main resolution, which was seconded by Hakim Ajmal Khan, and after being supported by several speakers was duly adopted. It read :

"Resolved that this meeting composed of Musalmans from all parts of India, assembled at Dacca, decided that a Political Association be formed styled All-India Moslem League, for the furtherance of the following objects:

"(*a*) To promote, among the Musalmans of India, feelings of loyalty to the British Government, and to remove any misconception that may arise as to the intention of the Government with regard to any of its measures.

"(*b*) To protect and advance the political rights and interests of the Musalmans of India, and to respectfully represent their needs and aspirations to the Government.

"(*c*) To prevent the rise, among the Musalmans of India, of any feeling of hostility towards other communities, without prejudice to the other aforementioned objects of the League." [18]

In due course, Nawab Salim Ullah toured the province and addressed meetings at various places in an effort to organise the Muslims of Bengal. Another leader active in East Bengal was Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhri, the grandfather of Muhammad Ali of Bogra, the third Prime Minister of Pakistan. When the Provincial Muslim League for Eastern Bengal was instituted at Dacca, Maulvi Kazim-ud-Din became its President and Nawab Salim Ullah Khan, its Secretary. In 1908, the Nawab presided at the annual session of All-India Muslim Educational Conference held at Amritsar. As this city had a number of well-to-do Kashmiri families, and the Nawab's ancestors had migrated to Dacca from Kashmir, he received a great welcome and donated liberally to local charities. His last days, however, were far from happy. In December 1911, annulment of the partition of Bengal was announced, which deeply hurt him. He presided at the annual session of the Muslim League held in Calcutta on 3 March 1912. "The President of the session remarked in his address that the cancellation of the partition of Bengal was effected without reference or information to the Musalmans, but due to their faithfulness and loyalty they put up with it. In fact, the Nawab was deeply moved by the event and after the completion of his address he announced his decision to withhold his services to his community." Thereafter he did not participate in political activity and, after suffering another blow in the death of his son, passed away on 16 January 1915.

18. Quoted in S.R. Wasti, *Lord Minto and the Indian Nationalist Movement, 1905–1910*, p. 79.

Nawab Salim Ullah Khan died broken-hearted, at a comparatively early age, but the seeds he had helped to sow bore fruit. Not only did he contribute to the foundation of the All-India Muslim League, but the political life which he generated in Eastern Bengal did not die out. Hitherto, his family had remained aloof from politics. He broke the spell, and many members of his family—like Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din and Khwajah Shahab-ud-Din, his sister's sons—followed in his footsteps. Amongst many others, who responded to his call and whom he actively encouraged and brought prominently before the public, was A.K. Fazl-ul-Haq of Barisal whose biographer calls Sir Salim Ullah Khan his "political preceptor" and gives several instances of the encouragement he gave to the promising young man.[19] He adds: "In 1913 when Sir Salimullah was President of Bengal Muslim League, Fazl-ul-Haq was elected as General Secretary."[20] Fazl-ul-Haq rarely missed an opportunity of referring to the large-hearted Salim Ullah with affection and gratitude. In his eighty-fourth year, while addressing the annual convocation of the University of Dacca on 19 February 1957, he said:

"The University of Dacca was established in July 1921: in the first meeting of the University Court [at Dacca], I moved a resolution recording the appreciation and gratefulness of the Muslims of East Bengal to the late Nawab Salimullah who was a true lover of his country and people and a courageous and unselfish fighter for their progress and prosperity."[21]

19. A.S.M. Abdur Rab, *A.K. Fazlul Haq, His Life and Achievements*, pp. 16 ff.

20. Ibid., p. 17.

21. Ibid., p. 176.

Chapter 6

VIQAR-UL-MULK
(1841–1917)

SOON after Mohsin-ul-Mulk's death, far-reaching changes took place in the administration of the Aligarh College and even in the political policy of Indian Muslims. These changes were due partly to a few incidents, which we shall describe in the coming pages, and partly to certain developments in the general outlook of Muslim India, but perhaps the most important single factor responsible for them was the personality of Mohsin-ul-Mulk's successor.

Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk, who was unanimously elected Secretary of the Aligarh College on the death of Mohsin-ul-Mulk, was temperamentally akin to Syed Ahmad Khan. He was direct, straightforward—even brusque,—but Syed Ahmad, who had seen the dark days of the terror which stalked the streets of Delhi after British re-occupation in 1857, had a very cool head to match his stout heart. His policy of Anglo-Muslim friendship was subjected to a severe strain, but he allowed neither personal nor national grievances to deflect him from a course which he considered essential to the well-being of Muslim India. His son, Justice Syed Mahmud, had to leave the Bench of Allahabad High Court after differences with the Chief Justice which were essentially "racial" in their origin. Syed Ahmad Khan—indeed the entire Muslim India—was sorely hurt at Gladstone's policy towards the Sultan of Turkey. But Syed Ahmad Khan was convinced that against the rising tide of Hindu communalism, which was being fed by Tilak in the Deccan and Bankim Chander Chatterjee in Bengal, Anglo-Muslim friendship was the main hope of the Muslims—especially in the conditions which existed in his day—and, in spite of many temptations to the contrary, he continued to work for it.

In this, Viqur-ul-Mulk differed from him. He also was a clear-

headed politician, and valued Anglo-Muslim [friendship, but he lacked the Syed's patience and goodwill towards European staff of the Aligarh College. Thus, when occasions arose, when the European staff seemed to be making unfair demands, or when Government appeared to be oblivious of the sentiments of Indian Muslims, Viqar-ul-Mulk had no hesitation in departing from the path followed by Syed Ahmad and Mohsin-ul-Mulk.

Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk, whose real name was Mushtaq Husain, was born in 1841, in a village in Moradabad District of United Provinces. Like Syed Ahmad and Mohsin-ul-Mulk, he had to begin life at the lowest rung of the ladder. His first job was at Rs 10 per mensem as a temporary assistant teacher. In 1861, there was a widespread famine in Moradabad, and Syed Ahmad, who was in charge of relief arrangements, appointed the young Mushtaq Husain to look after the poor-house of Amroha where he performed his duties with great zeal and integrity. After this he reverted to the clerical line, and was reader to Syed Ahmad when he was Sub-Judge at Aligarh. He took active part in the educational efforts of his chief and, apart from assisting him in the management of the printing press and the office of the Scientific Society, collaborated in the translation of a book on "French Revolution and Napoleon".

When Syed Ahmad was transferred from Aligarh to Benares, he was succeeded as Sub-Judge by Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan, and thus Viqar-ul-Mulk had an opportunity of serving under two principal figures of the Aligarh College. He worked longer under Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan, and, as both had much in common, they became friends and co-workers for life. In 1870, the Society for Promotion of Education amongst Muslims invited contributions for a prize essay on the education of the Muslims, and out of the essays sent in response to this advertisement, Mohsin-ul-Mulk's contribution was judged to be the best and Viqar-ul-Mulk was placed second on the list. When, in 1873, the College Foundation Committee decided to open an elementary school at Aligarh, which in Syed Ahmad's absence was to be looked after by Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan, at that time the Secretary of the Aligarh branch, Viqar-ul-Mulk was his right-hand man in running the institution.

In 1875, he followed Mohsin-ul-Mulk to Hyderabad, and with a short break held high appointments in that state till 1892, when he had to resign owing to a local intrigue. During his service at Hyderabad he continued to take active interest in the affairs of the Aligarh College, and when controversy arose between Syed Ahmad Khan and Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan over some provisions of the Trustee Bill, he gave powerful support to Maulvi Sami Ullah. He, however, did not join him in leaving the College Committee and, although his personal views regarding the position of the European staff, etc., did not undergo any change, he continued his connection with the College.

After his retirement from Hyderabad he settled down at Amroha, and for a long time did not take any active part in public affairs. In 1900, however, when controversy arose between Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Sir Antony Macdonnel, he was moved into activity. He, at first, tried to see the Lieutenant-Governor and personally explain the case for Urdu, but when his Excellency declined to grant any interview, he took part in the shortlived but vigorous agitation against Government orders. Soon after this, Mohsin-ul-Mulk wrote an article in *The Aligarh Institute Gazette* on "What should be done by the Muslims to safeguard their political interests" and suggested that the "Mohammadan Anglo-Oriental Defence Association," started by Syed Ahmad and Theodore Beck in 1893, should be revived. Viqar-ul-Mulk immediately started correspondence with Mohsin-ul-Mulk on the point, and, after mutual consultation, it was decided that Viqar-ul-Mulk should take up the formation of a political organisation. The first meeting in furtherance of the proposal was held at Lucknow in October 1901, and later Viqar-ul-Mulk toured the country for securing public support. The progress, however, was very slow and a Muslim political organisation did not come into existence till after the Simla Deputation, organised by Mohsin-ul-Mulk, had given an inspiring lead some six years later.

Side by side with this, Viqar-ul-Mulk started taking active interest in the College affairs. Owing to difference in temperament and outlook, he and Mohsin-ul-Mulk did not see eye to eye on many matters of the College administration, but they continued to

work together and, on Mohsin-ul-Mulk's death, in 1907, he was elected the Secretary of the Board of Trustees.

One of the first important questions which Viqar-ul-Mulk had to handle was the question of the powers of the College principal and the European staff. This was an old skeleton in the College cupboard and as it affected the working of the Aligarh College over a number of years, and had repercussions even on our national life, perhaps a detailed account may not be out of place. The question had been a source of anxiety since Syed Ahmad's days. Originally, the trouble arose over some boarders beating hostel servants and when, after repeated warnings by Syed Ahmad and the College staff, things did not improve, disciplinary action was taken against one of them. As a protest, many others (including a ward of Viqar-ul-Mulk) left the College hostel, and went to stay in a *serai* (an inn) in the town. On this Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan who, apart from Syed Mahmud, was Syed Ahmad's principal co-worker in early days of the College and was paying special attention to the welfare of the boarders, intervened. Syed Ahmad wanted to have the question settled amicably, but now Beck, principal of the College, struck out for maintenance of full discipline, and objected to the members of the managing committee intervening in administrative matters. All the European staff supported him and even threatened to resign if they were not allowed to work on what they considered sound administrative lines. This led to a complete rupture between the European staff and Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan, who now began to attack the very principle of "a Muslim boarding house being entrusted to a Christian" European principal. He even objected to the appointment of highly paid European professors on grounds of economy. This controversy frightened the European staff, or at least gave them a handle. They began to urge that their work would become impossible if, after Syed Ahmad, the affairs of the College passed into the hands of Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan, or if their position was not made secure under the College constitution. They, therefore, demanded statutory safeguards for themselves, and suggested that Syed Mahmud, who had attracted most of them to Aligarh, should be made Joint Secretary so that he could succeed Syed Ahmad

after his death.

Some "highly placed Government officers" supported the proposal, and after considerable hesitation, Syed Ahmad agreed to include it in a Trustee Bill, drafted for re-organisation of the College constitution. This Bill was passed by the College Committee after a bitter controversy and Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan severed his connections with the College.

During Mohsin-ul-Mulk's regime the difficulties increased. Under the Trustee Bill, the principal had been given wide powers of internal administration. Now, Sir Antony Macdonnel, the Governor of the Province, began to correspond directly with him, and supported him even against the secretary. On the other hand, active dissatisfaction with many measures of College administration was growing in an influential section of the College students and old boys—including Maulana Muhammad Ali and Maulana Shaukat Ali. This section had the support of Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk who was with Sami Ullah in opposing the Trustee Bill, but had not, like him, resigned from the College Committee. The differences between the staff and the students took a serious turn in 1907, when there was a strike by the College students, which shook the College to its foundations. This was a great blow to Mohsin-ul-Mulk, who, however, got over the crisis by appointing an Inquiry Commission, which settled the immediate question amicably. The Commission, however, did not deal with the controversial question of the powers of the principal. This had to be tackled after Mohsin-ul-Mulk's death by Viqar-ul-Mulk, and looking to his lifelong associations with Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan and his firm, strong bent of mind, there could be no doubt about the lines on which he would settle it.

Viqar-ul-Mulk was elected Honorary Secretary of the College on 15 December 1907, and soon matters between him and Principal Archbold came to a head. On some questions, it is true the principal was in the right, but he exhibited complete lack of imagination and tact, and forgot that he was dealing with a man of a temperament quite different from that of Mohsin-ul-Mulk. There was a daily difference of opinion between the principal and the secretary. At length, on 20 March 1908, the principal

submitted his resignation as a protest against the continuous interference of the honorary secretary. The other European members of the staff supported him and soon Sir John Hewett, the Governor of the Province, who was also the Patron of the College, took action under Sections 139 and 141 of the Trustees Act. He called the President and the honorary secretary of the Board of Trustees, as also the principal of the College, and discussed various points, over which a difference of opinion had arisen between the secretary and the principal. He supported Viqar-ul-Mulk in some and Archbold in others, but on the basic question he urged that there should be no interference by the honorary secretary in the administrative powers of the principal, and as an example (of the supreme ignorance in high circles, about what was really happening !) alleged that the last strike in the College was due to the interference of the former honorary secretary (Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk) in these matters.

Viqar-ul-Mulk, who was not convinced, returned to Aligarh and placed the entire matter before the Board of Trustees. With a few minor differences of opinion, the trustees wholeheartedly supported him and in a resolution, while reaffirming the statutory powers of the principal, pointed out that they were being abused, and generally endorsed the stand taken by the honorary secretary. In the meanwhile, the Governor asked the honorary secretary to implement the decisions taken at Lucknow, but Viqar-ul-Mulk refused to take any action until the matter had been decided by the Board of Trustees. He, thereupon, was invited to discuss the matter with the Governor, but he politely declined to go until the views of the trustees were known.

In the meanwhile an agitation commenced in the Muslim press and on public platform against the efforts of the Governor, and the viewpoint of Viqar-ul-Mulk was widely endorsed. His Highness The Aga Khan and Right Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali sent cables from England supporting the stand taken by the honorary secretary and also wrote a joint letter to the Governor, explaining the popular point of view and advising him not to do anything which might be misunderstood by the Muslim public. The Governor, thereafter, wrote a very mild letter to the President of

the Board of Trustees declaring that nothing could be further from his intentions than to turn Aligarh College into a Government institution and when a deputation of Trustees met him later, he accepted the right of the honorary secretary to intervene in certain matters. After this the Trustees accepted the resignation of the principal, enumerated in writing the powers of the honorary secretary and forbade direct correspondence on questions of policy between the principal and the Governor or Director of Public Instruction. The European staff, thereupon, withdrew their joint note, and one of them was appointed to succeed Archbold.

Thus ended a long-drawn controversy about the administration of the College and a new era was opened in its working. Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk's share in moulding the political policy of the Indian Muslims was equally fateful and equally characteristic of the man. He had sharp differences of opinion with his predecessor about the rights of the European staff and certain questions of the College administration, but he was completely at one with him in political matters. He always looked back to the year of the Simla Deputation (1906) as the beginning of Muslim political rebirth in India and, like Syed Ahmad and Mohsin-ul-Mulk, pinned his faith on the Anglo-Muslim alliance, as one means of saving Muslims from being submerged by the majority community. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru has, in his *Autobiography*, referred sarcastically to a statement of Syed Ahmad that it was in the interest of India that the British connection with this country should continue indefinitely. It is easy to laugh at this remark—especially for those who do not know the background—but if Pandit Nehru had tried to probe into the causes which led a sturdy and self-reliant person like Syed Ahmad to make this observation, he would have realised something of the anguish and anxiety which thoughtful Muslims were experiencing about their future in India, and how they were clucthing at every straw to save themselves. Nobody can accuse Viqar-ul-Mulk of a faint heart or any exaggerated love for the Europeans or the British, but he felt exactly like Syed Ahmad on this question and, like a blunt, straightforward man, he gave expression to his views as forcefully as Syed Ahmad. He said :

"We are numerically one-fifth of the other community. If at any time the British government ceases to exist in India, we shall have to live as the subjects of the Hindus, and our property, our self-respect and our religion will be all in danger. . . . If there is any device by which we can escape this, it is by the continuance of the British Raj, and our interests can be safeguarded only if we ensure the continuance of the British government."[1]

Of course, this policy could not be carried on indefinitely, but the fact that Syed Ahmad and Viqar-ul-Mulk were not giving way to imaginary fears can be seen in the fate of Muslims in East Punjab, Delhi, Ajmer, and other innumerable places in India, since the departure of the British on 15 August 1947.

Viqar-ul-Mulk was loyally carrying on the political policy of his two predecessors, when something happeted and Viqar-ul-Mulk had to radically readjust his views. In December 1911, Coronation Durbar was held at Delhi, and the "settled fact" of partition of Bengal was unsettled. This gave a rude shock to the Muslims. They were generally happy about the partition and did not like its annulment, but, more than that, in the change of policy, they saw the clay feet of the Colossus. There is no doubt that the new decision was wrong. If the original arrangement was worse, it should have never been ordered, or at least rectified before successive governments had declared for years that there would be no going back. The Proclamation at Delhi, coming after years of prolonged and violent agitation by Bengali Hindus, convinced the people, as nothing else could, that political agitation paid good dividends. It was always a beacon of encouragement to the drooping spirits of an agitator, and it also showed to the Muslims who, it was urged, were to benefit by partition, that their interests would not be safeguarded by blind reliance on a benevolent government. The Muslim reaction was sharp, if not violent, and Viqar-ul-Mulk was the first to give expression to their point of view. On return from the Durbar, he immediately wrote an article on "The Fate of Muslims in India," which appeared in *The Aligarh Institute Gazette* of 20 December 1911, and in which, after politely but firmly criticising the decision of the government, he went on to say:

1. Quoted in *Tazkirah-i Viqar*, pp. 160–70.

"It is now manifest like the midday sun that after seeing what has happened lately, it is futile to ask the Muslims to place their reliance on Government. Now the days for such reliances are over. What we should rely on, after the grace of God, is the strength of our right arm, for which we have, before us, the example of our worthy countrymen." [2]

He wrote other articles on the subject, and gave expression to the same feeling in a private letter:

"If on the question of Local Boards, Government considers the Muslims as worthless, as they have been considered at the time of the annulment of partition of Bengal, then God help them in this matter also. It is the duty of the Muslims that they should make a strong effort and show to Government what dismay has been caused by its indifference to their interests in not reassuring the Muslims, at the time of the annulment, as to how their interests would be safeguarded under the new arrangements. This policy of the Government is like artillery passing over the dead bodies of the Muslims, without realising whether any life remained in the bodies and whether they would be hurt." [3]

Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk was criticised by *The Pioneer* and other Anglo-Indian papers for throwing overboard the policy of loyalty preached by Syed Ahmad Khan, but he was vigorously supported by the Muslim press—particularly *The Comrade* of Calcutta and the *Zamindar* of Lahore—and his articles became the starting point of a new era in Indo-Muslim politics.

The nationalist circles were naturally happy at this reorientation of Muslim policy, but so far as the Indian National Congress was concerned, Viqar-ul-Mulk firmly stuck to what Syed Ahmad had said. He made the position crystal clear in his article of 20 December 1911. Referring to the decision to rescind the partition of Bengal, he said:

"By this decision Government displayed improper indifference to the Muslims, and the result is that some educated Muslims have begun to say that it is not in Muslims' interest to keep aloof from the Hindus. They suggest that we should say 'Goodbye' to the Muslim League and join the Indian National Congress—and this is what the Congress has been after for many years. We agree that the Government has given a legitimate cause for complaint to the Muslims, but we totally differ from the suggestion that we

2. Ibid., pp. 340–41. 3. Ibid., p. 344. (See also *Makatib*.)

should disband our own national organisation, and join the other large group, just as a river loses its identity in a vast ocean.

"It is true that many a time disappointments point the way to suicide, and the suggestion that we should join the Congress is a result of similar disappointments—for which the present Government is responsible—but suicide is never advisable."

Some years later, when Muslims were sore at the Government attitude towards the proposed Muslim University at Aligarh, and suggestions for joining hands with the Hindus were revived, Viqar-ul-Mulk reiterated his advice. He urged that Hindus and Muslims should live like best of friends, but, in matters in which their interests differed, it was desirable that they should continue to have separate platforms.

Apart from the changes in the control and administration of the College, and the new direction he gave to Muslim political policy, Viqar-ul-Mulk's regime is known for deepening of the religious life of the Aligarh College, and its popularity even with the most orthodox sections. Mohsin-ul-Mulk had tried to win the *ulama* with his suavity and tact; Viqar-ul-Mulk attracted them because he was really one of them. He had strong religious bent of mind, and his views became firmer with the passage of time. He knew that the strength of character, which he himself or Syed Ahmad or Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan possessed, and which had enabled them to accomplish marvels, in spite of severe handicaps, was derived from religion, and he did not wish the Aligarh boys to grow up without getting a full share of religious training and enthusiasm. He did everything in his power to strengthen religious feeling in the College. He made it clear that those who did not say their prayers regularly were liable to be sent out of the College, and refused to admit into the College a boy whose father insisted that attendance at prayers should not be made compulsory for him. Attendance at prayers was made compulsory for all sub-proctors, and it was made obligatory for all students to pass in the paper on "Islamic Religion". The result was that at prayer times, the College mosques were full as they had never been before, and as Viqar-ul-Mulk was encouraging religious sentiments, not only by rules and regulations, but by his own inspiring example, there

was a visible deepening of religious life. It would be interesting to read on this subject the views of Maulana Shaukat Ali, a prominent old boy of the Aligarh College. He wrote in an Urdu letter, later published in the biography of Viqar-ul-Mulk:

"The revoluion which can be seen in our materialistic and even 'dandyish' lives was due to the simple Islamic life of the late Nawab Sahib [Viqar-ul-Mulk]. His example inspired us with respect for the grandeur of true Muslim life, and showed us that even in the twentieth century, a Muslim could easily live a religious and Islamic life and serve his community and country."

This naturally pleased the *ulama*, and the result was that not only some celebrated theologians, who were personally opposed to English education (like Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi) visited the College and delivered sermons, but some others, like Maulana Abdul Bari of Farangi Mahal, chose the Aligarh College for education of their own children.

In many respects Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk exercised a healthy influence on the institution, of which he was the secretary, but it cannot be said that nothing which he did was open to criticism. It has, for example, been urged that lowering of the very high educational standards, which the Aligarh College had maintained during its first thirty years, started in his time. His extreme religious orthodoxy also sometimes exceeded the true interests of the College or the community. Hakim Ahmad Shuja, who was studying at Aligarh in his days, has described in his autobiography how he and some others brought on themselves fiery wrath of Viqar-ul-Mulk by attempting to stage a play inside the College. Perhaps there will be some Muslims who may support Viqar-ul-Mulk on this point, but the efforts he made to turn the College into a stronghold of Sunni orthodoxy were certainly not in the interest of the College—or the community. Maulvi Badr-ud-Din, who has, otherwise, warmly praised Viqar-ul-Mulk, says in his Urdu account of the College:

"As the Aligarh College was giving education to boys belonging to different Islamic sects, its policy was to confine religious education to what was barely essential, and what had been agreed to, from the beginning of the College.

"Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk was the first to depart from this

policy. He suggested a separate prayer-hall for Qadianis, and by appointing, under the influence of some bigoted *ulama*, separate imams [Muslim priests] for Sunni boarders in various hostels, he departed from the sound religious policy followed in the College. This led to religious disputes and controversies, and had its effect on the Shiah students, especially as some bigoted Shiah *ulama* tried to exploit the situation."

Syed Ahmad had from the beginning shown a special consideration to the Shiahs. He aimed at creating a common Muslim nationhood by attracting on a common platform various religious sects of Islam, and he realised that, in order to achieve this, he must respect the religious susceptibilities of the smaller groups. His policy was eminently successful, and really the large-scale voluntary sharing by Shiahs and Sunnis of a common educational and training institutions was something of a landmark in the history of Muslim India, but developments during the regime of Viqar-ul-Mulk alienated the Shiahs, and had their share in the foundation of a separate Shiah college at Lucknow.

Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk could not, unluckily, serve the College very long. He was more than sixty-six when he was elected honorary secretary and, five years later, he had to retire owing to ill-health. Even before this, he generally stayed at Amroha. He, however, continued to take general interest in the welfare of his people and, on many important occasions, gave powerful support to the young and progressive elements in our public life. Muslim opinion was at that time greatly perturbed over the difficulties in which Turkey was involved and, departing from the policy of Syed Ahmad and Mohsin-ul-Mulk who, on such occasions, had always exercised a restraining influence, Viqar-ul-Mulk fully endorsed the popular viewpoint and supported various measures taken to express them. On the question of the Muslim University also, he was with those who wanted an educational centre completely free from Government right of interference, and when, in 1913, Tyler, the District Magistrate of Cawnpore, ordered firing on the crowds which had collected to rebuild a demolished mosque, he advised Muslims to express themselves strongly, as "otherwise, every police sub-inspector will become a Tyler for us". His interest in the religious side of the Muslim youth con-

tinued unabated. When Maulana Ubaid Ullah Sindhi opened an institute at Delhi for giving religious education to Muslim graduates, he agreed to become its patron and, apart from private efforts, issued a public appeal for contributions.

Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk passed away on 27 January 1917 at the age of seventy-six and was buried at Amroha where he had settled after his retirement from the College.

Even before this, owing to ill-health, old age and absence from Aligarh he had ceased to be effective in national affairs. On becoming the secretary of the College on 15 December 1907 he wished to resign from the secretaryship of the League, but was persuaded to continue for a few months longer, and, in March 1908, Syed Husain Bilgrami became the honorary secretary. The Aga Khan became permanent President of the League at the same time. In early 1910 the office of the All-India Muslim League was shifted from Aligarh to Lucknow and that may be taken as the end of the predominance of Aligarh in the political affairs of the Muslim community.

Mohsin-ul-Mulk's successor at Aligarh was Viqar-ul-Mulk, though true heirs to his constructive but essentially moderate and co-operative policy were The Aga Khan and Ameer Ali. The battle of the separate electorates had not been finally won with the reassuring reply of the Viceroy at Simla. Morley, the Liberal Secretary of the State, favoured a scheme by which the provision for separate electorates was completely watered down. Muslim opinion in India was hostile. In particular, the Punjab Press—*The Observer*, *Paisa Akhbar*, *Zamindar* and *Vatan*[4]—carried on a vigorous campaign against the proposed modifications. It was, however, primarily due to Ameer Ali's sustained efforts that Morley's proposals did not go through. He had settled down in London and mobilised British opinion in favour of the Muslim point of view. Among other measures he took a deputation to the Secretary of State in whose presence the case for separate

4. For the views expressed by *Paisa Akhbar*, *Vatan*, *Zamindar*, and *The Observer* of Lahore, see S.R. Wasti, *Lord Minto and the Indian Nationalist Movement, 1905 to 1920*, pp. 171, 172.

electorates was argued at length. *The Times*, London, also advocated the Muslim cause and ultimately rules and regulations were framed which, in November 1909, fulfilled to a great extent Minto's promise to the Simla Deputation. This ensured that there was no backsliding, and the proposals advocated by Mohsin-ul-Mulk in 1906 became a part of Minto-Morely Reforms.

Chapter 7

THE RELIGIOUS GROUPS

THE Aligarh movement has been called "the central factor of Islamic renaissance in India".[1] It gave the Muslims a central institution which provided them with a common intellectual background, common national objectives and "an intellectual general staff for the work of Islamic integration". There were, however, other forces which also contributed to national consolidation. Leaving aside certain factors for which the British were responsible, and the indirect influence of India-wide conflict with Hindus, the institutions grew up within the country which, though originally not allied with Aligarh leadership and occasionally even in opposition, contributed to national awakening and solidarity.

Deoband. Most important of these was the seminary at Deoband which, according to a foreign observer, is "next to the Azhar of Cairo, the most important and respected theological academy of the Muslim world".[2] Its beginnings were humble and the name of the original founder is all but unknown. The idea of establishing a *Madrasah* for teaching religious subjects was originally of a practising Sufi and a reputed saint, Haji Muhammad Abid of Deoband. In 1866, soon after the completion of a *chillah,* one night he saw a vision of the Prophet and in the morning collected his admirers and said that "religious knowledge is disappearing. Something should be done to keep it up. When the old *ulama* will pass away, nobody will be left to give information about religious injunctions, as since the *Madrasah* at Delhi had stopped functioning, nobody is acquiring religious knowledge".[3] He suggested that funds should be collected and a *Madrasah*

1. K.M. Pannikar, *A Survey of Indian History*, p. 283.
2. W.C. Smith, *Modern Islam in India*, p. 320.
3. Haji Nazir Ahmad, *Tazkira-tul-Abidin*, pp. 68–69.

established. He made his own contribution and went round Deoband to collect funds. The response was heartening and next day Haji Abid wrote to Maulana Muhammad Qasim who was at that time in Meerut, informing him of the developments and requesting him to come and teach at Deoband. The Maulana was unable to come himself, but sent a suitable teacher and promised all help. Haji Abid became the honorary patron and manager, and a Managing Committee including the Maulana and four or five others was appointed. Soon ample funds became available and Maulana Muhammad Yaqub, a leading educationist, was appointed as the headmaster, and other administrative arrangements were made. On 14 April 1866, the *Madrasah* started functioning in a small mosque.

Historically, Haji Muhammad Abid was the original founder of the Deoband seminary, but the development and the success of the *Madrasah* was essentially due to Maulana Muhammad Qasim who joined it a couple of years after its establishment, and his cousin, Maulana Muhammad Yaqub. Haji Abid did not have a large institution in view. He wanted a simple *Madrasah* on old lines. This was due partly to his asceticism and other-worldliness, and partly also to the fact that he was not acquainted with the lines on which new educational institutions were being set up. On the other hand, both Maulana Muhammad Qasim and Maulana Muhammad Yaqub had seen the working of the Delhi College where Maulana Muhammad Yaqub's father (and Maulana Muhammad Qasim's uncle) Maulana Mamlook Ali was the Head of the Arabic Department. Before joining Deoband, Maulana Muhammad Yaqub was Deputy Educational Inspector in government service and was well acquainted with the modern educational system. The *Madrasah* at Deoband followed Madrasah-i Rahimiyah named after Shah Wali Ullah's father, in its emphasis on *Hadith*, etc., but it also incorporated many features of the new educational institutions established by the British, e.g. division of students in regular classes, attendance registers, written examinations. These features systematised the working of the *Madrasah*, but its expansion and success were greatly helped by Maulana Muhammad Qasim's vision, saintliness and influence. Maulana Muhammad Qasim died on 15 April 1880 at the early age of

forty-nine, but his work was continued by others. In 1931, 900 students were on the rolls of the *Madrasah* out of whom 368 were from U.P., 185 from Bengal, 150 from N.W.F.P. and Punjab, 26 from Assam and Burma, 17 from Chinese Turkistan and 26 from Bukhara. After the partition the *Madrasah* has had to face storms and stresses, but has continued its basic work. The number of students from areas which now constitute Pakistan must be negligible, but numerous institutions have been started in Pakistan by those who had studied at Deoband and the educational traditions of the mother institution are being maintained.

Maulana Ubaid Ullah Sindhi has said that after the unsuccessful War of Independence, Maulana Muhammad Qasim took the Arabic Department of the old Delhi College to Deoband, while Syed Ahmad Khan took the English Department to Aligarh. Maulana Sindhi was speaking figuratively, but even then his statement is a gross over-simplification. Syed Ahmad Khan always had a deep regard for the founders of the Deoband seminary, and wrote a long and moving article on the death of Maulana Muhammad Qasim. At Aligarh College the Department of Theology was entrusted to a near relation and pupil of Maulana Muhammad Qasim, who had studied at Deoband. Syed Ahmad's later religious views, however, could not but be an anathema to the authorities at Deoband and, at one time, he and Maulana Muhammad Qasim engaged in a controversy, practically of the same type as he had with his comrade and successor, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk.

What widened the gulf between the authorities at Deoband and Aligarh was their completely different approach to politics. Maulana Muhammad Qasim was as active during the Revolt of 1857 as Syed Ahmad Khan was, but they were ranged on opposite sides. Syed Ahmad remained loyal to the British, while the Maulana and his companions fought them and for some time established their own government in their area. On the suppression of the revolt by the British, Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi, one of the Maulana's companions and later his successor as patron of Deoband seminary, had to spend several months in jail, while their spiritual teacher Haji Imdad Ullah had to seek refuge at Mecca.

When Syed Ahmad Khan denounced the Indian National Congress and advised the Muslims to remain aloof from it, Maulana Muhammad Qasim was not alive, but Maulana Gangohi violently differed from him and denounced his point of view. The anti-British attitude became a marked feature of Deoband, and Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan, who was head of the institution for twenty-three years, actually left India during the First World War. He settled down at Mecca, but under British pressure was exiled to Malta and was allowed to return to his native land only in 1920. In the meanwhile the political atmosphere at Aligarh had greatly changed. The beginning of this change was visible in the attitude of Hasrat Mohani in 1906 or so, but after the annulment of the partition of Bengal and the wars in Tripoli and the Balkans, most of the prominent old boys of Aligarh like Muhammad Ali, Shaukat Ali and Zafar Ali Khan were in the vanguard of anti-British agitation. Even before he migrated to the Hijaz, Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan had encouraged contacts between Aligarh and Deoband. In 1906 Jamia-tul-Ansar was established at Deoband. The meeting of this organisation was attended by Sahibzadah Aftab Ahmad Khan of Aligarh College and it was agreed that the Deoband seminary would make special arrangements for teaching religious subjects to the graduates of Aligarh College, while similar facilities in respect of English would be provided at Aligarh to those who had completed their studies at Deoband. The Maulana's most fruitful effort in this direction was his inauguration of Jamiah Milliyah at Delhi in spite of serious illness, shortly before his death in November 1920. This institution which was originally set up for students who had discontinued studies at Aligarh during the Non-Co-operation movement incorporated many features of Deoband.

An interesting personality connected with Deoband was that of Maulana Ubaid Ullah Sindhi. Born at Sialkot in 1872 to Sikh parents, he accepted Islam at the hands of a Sindhi saint and proceeded for higher studies to Deoband. He became a favourite pupil of Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan and took active part in religious and political activities. He figured in what has been described in the report of the Rowlatt Committee as "The Silk Letter

Conspiracy" and left India for Afghanistan during the First World War to organise action against the British. He was Home Minister in the Provisional Government of India formed at Kabul by Raja Mahendra Partab and Professor Barkat Ullah of Bhopal. Owing to the opposition of Amir Habibullah, their efforts did not succeed and the Maulana proceeded to Moscow after the Russian Revolution. After spending many years there and studying the working of the Communist Revolution he moved to Turkey and later to Mecca, and returned to India only in March 1939. He was warmly welcomed by the admirers of Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan, but he had had an opportunity to study political movements in far-off countries and, although he made Shah Wali Ullah's writings the basis of his teachings, he introduced many things which appeared strange to stay-at-home *ulama*. His views, therefore, did not command orthodox support, but he remained busy in spite of his old age in propagating his philosophy and programme. He passed away a few years after his return and is buried in a village near Bahawalpur.

Till 1947 at least, political traditions of Deoband differed from those of Aligarh. This led to controversies, but perhaps it is fair to say that the establishment of a central institution catering to the requirements of religious education for the Muslim community all over the subcontinent had, within certain limitations, a unifying effect. During the Pakistan movement the majority of the teachers and students at Deoband kept aloof from the struggle and even opposed it, but a sizable number under the leadership of sagacious and saintly Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani took active part in the struggle and helped the Quaid-i Azam.

Brelvi Sect. It is claimed on behalf of Deoband that it follows the path shown by Shah Wali Ullah, and his maintaining the traditions which originally came in vogue at Madrasah-i Rahimiyah of Delhi. Deoband has absorbed some features of modern educational organisation, but largely it is true that it maintains the traditions of Shah Wali Ullah. The "chain" of students of all important teachers of the institution reaches Shah Wali Ullah and study of *Hadith* occupies the same place of pride at Deoband as it did at the earlier *Madrasah* at Delhi. Emphasis on

the spiritual side, and an attempt to incorporate best traditions of all Sufi orders and similar catholic approach to Islamic Law as characterises Shah Wali Ullah's school of thought are visible here. It seems to be forgotten, however, that subtle but significant differences existed even between members of Wali Ullah's family and exist among many who claim to belong to his school of thought. Shah Abdul Aziz, who perhaps more than anybody else was responsible for the general acceptance of Shah Wali Ullah's views and methods, was less venturesome than his father in intellectual sphere. Shah Ismail Shaheed, on the other hand, was far more radical and occasionally overlooked the basic principle of Shah Wali Ullah that a reformer, to be effective, must not cut himself away from the group which he wishes to reform. In his eagerness to emphasise the majesty of Godhead, and underline the humanity of the Prophet, Shah Ismail Shaheed occasionally used language which hurt the susceptibilities of many Muslims. Whether Shah Ismail Shaheed came under Wahabi influence at Mecca is a moot point, but there are others who claim to follow Shah Wali Ullah's line of approach but have been positively influenced by Wahabi writings. The fact that many things are common between the reforms which Shah Wali Ullah and the Wahabi teachers urged, naturally leads to confusion. This has been made worse by publication of works which are not Shah Wali Ullah's and represent purely Wahabi point of view. The distinction between the two schools of thought has not always been maintained at Deoband, and even some of its best known teachers have urged a point of view which is more akin to that of the Wahabi teachers of Shah Ismail Shaheed than that of Shah Wali Ullah and Shah Abdul Aziz. In fact, some enthusiasts like Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi have contrasted Shah Ismail Shaheed and Shah Abdul Aziz and positively preferred the former. This attitude has contributed not a little to Deobandi-Brelvi controversy, which has occasionally led to serious situations in parts of the former Punjab.

The Brelvis follow Maulvi Ahmad Raza Khan who was born in 1855 in Bans Bareli of Rohilkhand Division. They stand for old traditional Islam and enthusiastically defend Sufi and religious

practices to which Wahabis and some Deobandis take exception. Maulvi Ahmad Raza Khan wrote some fifty pamphlets on controversial subjects. He criticised, not only Shah Ismail Shaheed and the Wahabis, but even Shah Wali Ullah. Some recent Brelvi writers, however, draw a distinction between Shah Ismail Shaheed and Shah Wali Ullah. Maulvi Ahmad Raza Khan was critical of Aligarh movement, but his group has not been generally anti-British on the lines of Deoband. Owing to the absence of a major *Madrasah* like that of Deoband, the influence of the Brelvi group among the educated classes has not been very considerable, but it is popular among the masses, and especially in south-western parts of the Punjab its hold is strong.

Sufi Orders. The Brelvi school believes in the homage to saints and organisations of some Sufi orders and the Brelvi organisations like *Hizb-ul-Ahnaf* occasionally merge. Generally, the Sufi orders work through personal contact between the *Pir* and the disciple or in small groups, but occasionally organisations on a bigger scale have also been attempted. In particular efforts made by Khwajah Hasan Nizami who belonged to the family of a famous saint of Delhi deserve to be mentioned. In 1908 he tried his hand at a countrywide organisation of the *Pirs* of all spiritual orders collected under "Halqah-i Nizam-ul-Mashshaikh" and in July 1909 brought out a journal, *Nizam-ul-Mashshaikh*, to propagate the objects of the *Halqah*. Owing as much to individualistic approach of the *Pirs* as of their mutual differences, his attempts did not succeed. The magazine was, however, popular and useful, mainly owing to the literary skill of its promoter and of Mulla Wahidi, its editor. It continued in existence for more than thirty years. *Pirs* in predominantly Muslim areas have rarely adopted or patronised such modern methods, but there are exceptions. For many years, a magazine entitled *Sufi* was issued from a small town in the Punjab, and was patronised by a local saint. Sufi journals generally use simple language and have a broad, humanitarian approach.

Nadva-tul-Ulama of Lucknow. This institution came into existence in 1894 as a result of the efforts of some religious-minded Government officials, *ulama* and Sufis, who wished to

bring the *ulama* together and remove sectarian differences. Syed Ahmad Khan was somewhat sceptical of the organisation's success but welcomed the move. The main work of the organisation was the establishment of a *Dar-ul-Uloom* at Lucknow which has had an interesting, if somewhat chequered, history. For some time Shibli Nomani, for many years Syed's co-worker and later a critic, was associated with the institution. Under his influence it gained in importance, but in 1914 he was forced to resign. It has a magnificent building constructed with a grant from Bahawalpur State. It never gained the popularity and importance which Deoband has in religious circles, but it has developed its own characteristics. The tradition of training in literary craftsmanship and style of modern Arabic which Shibli introduced is maintained in some degree and the "Academy of Authors" (Dar-ul-Musannifin) at Azamgarh manned by the former students of the Nadvah may almost be called its by-product. We shall deal with these institutions more fully in the next chapter, relating to Maulana Shibli Nomani.

Chapter 8

SHIBLI
(1857–1914)

ALL the four major figures, whose careers have been described in the preceding pages, were connected, in one way or another, with Aligarh. One of them (Hali) spent very little time at Aligarh; another (Viqar-ul-Mulk) introduced many changes, which his two predecessors in office would, in all probability, have resisted. Still they were all leaders of the Aligarh movement. They all believed in the value of this movement for raising their community from low political, economic and intellectual level to which it had fallen and devoted their lives to the accomplishment of this object.

The man of genius whose activities form the subject-matter of this chapter was also connected with Aligarh, but some of the results of his efforts were quite different from those achieved by the other four. Perhaps his most dramatic contribution to the making of modern Muslim India is not in the strengthening of the Aligarh movement but in undermining it. After his education, he spent sixteen years on the staff of Aligarh College; the remaining sixteen were spent partly at Hyderabad and partly in attempting to build up a rival and almost a hostile organisation.

Shibli was born in the year of the Indian Revolt, at a village near Azamgarh. His father was a prominent member of the local bar, a big zamindar and an industrialist. The promising child received the best education available in the old Islamic *Madrasahs*, and was deeply influenced by Maulana Muhammad Faruq, a celebrated scholar, who was stoutly opposed to the new movement of Syed Ahmad, and had written a poem in opposition to the famous *Musaddas* of Hali. His father, however, had by now come under the spell of Syed Ahmad, and not only did he give high modern education to his other children—one of whom was sent to England

for higher studies—but it was suggested to Shibli that he, too, might make up his deficiencies by acquiring a knowledge of English. This he disdainfully refused, and, with the highest attainments in Islamic sciences, had to spend some very unhappy years, trying unsuccessfully to obtain petty jobs in Government offices.

Ultimately, in 1883, he was appointed Assistant Professor of Arabic at the Aligarh College. He impressed Syed Ahmad favourably. He was keen, well-read and ambitious, and the old man took very kindly to him. He gave him a cottage in the compound of his own bungalow, placed his library, which at that time had probably the richest collection in India, of printed books on Islamic subjects, at his disposal and had him for meals almost every day.

He made full use of the opportunities available at Aligarh College, participated enthusiastically in its manifold activities and became one of Syed Ahmad's principal helpmates. He had received traditional education under renowned teachers and had shown promise as a poet and writer, but hitherto his efforts had been confined to sectarian polemics. Syed Ahmad's rich collection of Arabic works published in Europe and Egypt (and virtually unknown in India) opened new vistas before him. At Aligarh he found not only written treasures of learning, but also scholars with whom he could usefully discuss matters of common interest and learn what advances had been made in the West in the technique of historiography and kindred subjects. In this, he owed much to Sir Thomas Arnold, who joined Aligarh College a few years later and, among other things, taught French to Shibli, but the process had started much earlier—with Syed Ahmad Khan.

The first fruit of Shibli's acquisition of new learning and reorientation of his attitude was a long and scholarly paper which he read before the Muhammadan Educational Conference in 1887. It was entitled "Mussalmanon ki Guzashtah Talim" but was really a masterly study of Muslim contribution to knowledge.

About the same time Shibli undertook a more ambitious programme. In those days series like "Heroes of the Nations" were popular in England. Possibly inspired by these, Shibli prepared a plan relating to the "Heroes of Islam". The first book of the series was *Al-Mamun*, a biography of Mamun-ul-Rashid, which was

published in 1887. Originally, Shibli had proposed to confine himself to prominent Muslim rulers—the series was called *Silsilah-i Farman-Rawayan-i Islam*—in Urdu—and the detailed plan given in the introduction to *Al-Mamun* lists only ten prominent rulers, whose biographies were proposed to be written. Soon the plan was revised so as to include the "heroes" in various branches of Islamic learning. The second book of the series was a biography of Imam Abu Hanifah, published in 1893. The third, which came out in the year in which Shibli left Aligarh, was his masterpiece, *Al-Faruq*. The original plan was too ambitious to be fully implemented, but Shibli, later, wrote two other biographies—lives of Imam Ghazali and Maulana Rumi.

From time to time Shibli was also writing his learned articles or essays. Some were written to refute Western allegations against Islam and Muslims, e.g. *Al-Jizyah* and *Kutub Khanah-i Sikandriyah*. Perhaps the most scholarly of these papers was *Tarajum* ("The Translations"), which could have been very well called "Muslims and Sciences of Other People," as it gave a fairly full account of the steps taken by the Muslims in the heyday of their glory, to incorporate into Arabic the fruits of the learning of Greece, Iran, India, etc.

These and other historical writings, like *Shi'r-ul-Ajam*, *Ilm-ul-Kalam* and *Al-Kalam*, greatly enriched Urdu literature. They provided first-rate reading material on different facets and personalities of Islamic history. They also introduced into Urdu techniques and methods of Western historiography. One has only to read Shibli's introductions to *Al-Mamun* and *Al-Faruq* to realise how much he valued the advance which the modern historians of the West had made over earlier writers—Muslims and others—and which he incorporated in his works. In the introduction to *Al-Mamun* he says:

"I openly admit that in the present age the art of historiography has reached such a high level of advancement and the critical subtlety of Europe has made such profound additions to its principles and details that the old writings have become totally inadequate for our purpose."

He reiterated the same view, eleven years later, in the intro-

duction to *Al-Faruq*. After naming some old classics of Arab historiography, he says:

"The truth is that considering the progress, which the arts of historiography and biography have made at the present time, even those priceless treasures are not of much use."

Gibbon was the first major European historian to whose works Shibli had access. A few months after joining the staff of Aligarh College, he records in an Urdu letter his unbounded joy over discovering the wealth of new learning he found in Syed Ahmad's library. He refers, in general, to "some Arabic books on history and geography" which were printed in Europe and were "unknown to many big people, to say nothing of me," but singles out Gibbon for specific reference:

"Mr Gibbon's history which Syed [Ahmad Khan] Sahib has got translated [into Urdu] at an expense of Rs 600 is being studied by me."

Gibbon, the greatest of the English historians, had dealt at length and, for a European writer of these days, comparatively fairly with certain episodes of Muslim history. As Shibli noticed, he was the first to differ from many European (and Muslim) historians who had held Hazrat Umar responsible for the destruction of the great library of Alexandria. Like Shibli he was also a stylist and his grasp of his subject was broad and highly intelligent. It is hardly surprising that he fascinated Shibli, who quotes him with approval in his first book, *Al-Mamun*, and has other favourable references eslewhere. No documentary confirmation is available, but Shibli's daily routine—uninterrupted writing in the morning and relaxation and social company in the afternoon—so closely resembles Gibbon's schedule as described in his "Autobiography," that this may not be a mere coincidence, and may have been consciously modelled on the English historian's sensible method of work.

Gibbon's history was available to Shibli in Urdu, but even otherwise he found means—through contacts with the Professor of History at Aligarh College?—to keep in touch with the progress of historiography in the West, and in his books one comes across names with which the present Urdu writers—and many

teachers of history !—are not acquainted. For example, Ranke was a German historian, who revolutionised historical method in the West in the nineteenth century. He laid down the principles for scrutiny and evaluation of the historical material, indicated what should be the attitude of the historian towards his subject and the personalities dealt with by him, and propounded what would be the correct style for a scientific historian. He did more than anyone else to make history a science rather than a branch of literature. Shibli was not unacquainted with even this recent historian and in his introduction to *Al-Faruq*, after remarking that Ranke was the great European historian of the modern times and the pioneer of a new school in historiography, gives a brief resume of Ranke's views on the historical method.

Apart from acquaintance with the theory and technique of prominent European historions, Shibli took special pains to remain acquainted with the Western writings on his own subject —Islamic history. When he wrote *Al-Mamun*, he had Palmer's life of Harun-ul-Rashid before him, and, though he differed from some of the latter's conclusions, a study of his book must have suggested to him some new things, new method of treatment, etc. Later, when he began the writing of *Al-Ghazali*, he had before him two European works on Imam Ghazali and, as he admits, he made use of one of them.

By adoption of these methods, Shibli enriched Urdu literatrue and also promoted the objectives of the Aligarh movement, which aimed at raising the intellectual and educational level of Indian Muslims by drawing upon what was beneficial in East and West. But his contribution to national progress was even more significant. In his selection of historical personalities for detailed study and in his treatment of their life and work, he took care to emphasise what was rational, liberal and progressive in Muslim history. Mamun was preferred to the more popular Harun-ul-Rashid because the former's reign was the great age of Muslim intellectual activity. In his study of Imam Abu Hanifah, Shibli took great pains to emphasise that out of the four recognised schools of Islamic Law, the Hanafi school is most liberal, and could best provide a legal basis for a civilised and progressive

society. Similar considerations motivated the writing of *Al-Faruq* and *Al-Ghazali.* In fact, if historical writings of Shibli are carefully studied, it is seen that, except where he is dealing with Western criticism of Islam and Muslims, he is normally highlighting those periods and personalities of Muslim history which can offer guidance and provide inspiration to the present-day Muslims in enabling them to take their proper place in the world of today.

All this was in furtherance of the goals of the Aligarh movement. Shibli did more. In some of his writings he directly dealt with the factors which militated against Muslim progress and wrote things—as about the old system of education and the recent Muslim approach to the sciences developed by non-Muslims—which could not please the majority of the orthodox *ulama.* Some of these have been omitted from the eight-volume edition of *Maqalat-i Shibli* edited by Syed Suleman Nadvi who, with all his learning and dedication, lacked Shibli's courage and grasp of the true needs of the Muslim community, but have been included in *Baqiyat-i Shibli*, published from Lahore. Even *Maqalat-i Shibli* contains writings which run counter to the isolationist, self-complacent approach which Aligarh movement sought to destroy,[1] and which some of Shibli's successors have popularised.

Shibli did not serve the cause of Aligarh movement merely by propagating its ideals and objectives. For a long time, during his stay at Aligarh, he carried on direct publicity for the College and personages connected with it. He wrote *Qasidahs* when prominent visitors came to Aligarh. He accompanied the delegations which visited Bhopal and Hyderabad to raise funds for the College. In 1887, he wrote a long poem, entitled *Subh-i Umeed* ("The Dawn of Hope") which is the best versified account of the Aligarh movement and contains, perhaps, the warmest tribute ever paid to Syed Ahmad Khan.

This happy state of affairs was, however, not permanent. Shibli was extremely proud and sensitive by nature, and the

1. For example, the article entitled "Masail-i Fiqhiyah par Zamane ki Zaruraton ka Asar" (*Maqalat-i Shibli*, I, 75–81) and "Ghair Qaumon ki Mushabahat" (ibid., I, 172–78).

treatment which an Assistant Professor of Oriental Languages receives at a modern college hurt him. He was also not impressed with the intellectual results of modern education. He contrasted religious devotion to learning, which he and his companions at the old *Madrasahs* had felt, with the mercenary attitude of the College boys, and began to feel that the system of education which had produced Syed Ahmad, Hali, Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Viqar-ul-Mulk—and Shibli—should not be underrated. He had discussions with Syed Ahmad, and urged that the ideal system of education would be "a mingling of the old and the new"—really a modified form of the old system and not the new which was being followed at Aligarh.

In 1894, an organisation of the *ulama* (Nadva-tul-Ulama) was started, with such a wave of enthusiasm that, to quote Suleman Nadvi, the successor of Shibli, "many believed that this would lead to the establishment of the Government of the Maulvis".[2] This seemed to offer to the able and ambitious young man all that he wanted. Shibli felt that, by capturing and developing this institution, not only could he try his experiments in education but, as his lifelong friend Abdul Halim Sharar has said, he thought that "by becoming the head of religious *ulama*, he would get a status and authority, which was even beyond Syed Ahmad Khan". He, therefore, took active part in annual gatherings of the Nadvah, and soon after the death of Syed Ahmad, resigned from the Aligarh College in 1898 to devote himself entirely to the new movement.

He, however, had to wait for some years before he could join the central office of the Nadvah at Lucknow. At that time the Governor of the Province was Sir Antony Macdonell, who seemed to believe that every gathering of more than five self-respecting Muslims was a danger to public peace, and began to show marked attention to this gathering of the *ulama*. Officers of police shadowed the prominent leaders of the organisation, with the result that most of them left British India—some on pilgrimage to Mecca, and others to seek a sanctuary in Indian

2. Syed Suleman Nadvi, *Hayat-i Shibli*, p. 280.

states. Shibli was also a suspect, and, after consultations with Mohsin-ul-Mulk, he took asylum in Hyderabad. Here he got a remunerative post, and till Mohsin-ul-Mulk had secured the new Governor's consent to his return, and he had paid off the debts left by his father, he did not return to the north.

By now Shibli was something of a national figure, on account of his writings on historical, religious and literary subjects, and his association with the Nadvah enhanced the importance of the institution. He also worked hard to make it a powerful instrument of service to the community and a means of realisation of his dreams. He was in charge of the *Dar-ul-Uloom*, that was being maintained by the Nadvah, and he introduced many wholesome changes in the curriculum. He knew from bitter experience how essential a knowledge of English was for making headway in this queer world, and he made its study compulsory in the *Madrasah*. He also introduced some other changes in the educational methods and text-books—but the most marked feature of his educational method was the special attention which he devoted to a few select students. He took great pains to pick out and train the promising youths, who could carry on his work and spread his message. In particular, he gave them a thorough training in the craft of writing, so that they could establish themselves as authors and succeed him in the intellectual leadership of Muslim India. Two of the young men who received special attention from him were Syed Suleman Nadvi and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad—his literary and political successors.

The changes introduced by Shibli at the Nadvah did not involve an educational revolution. The students were not even taught history and geography, to say nothing of an adequate study of scientific subjects. Their knowledge of English was also perfunctory. They could not possibly fulfil all the needs of a modern society, but with basic brightening of the intellect, the inculcation of a special attitude towards national problems, and by a thorough training in the techniques of influencing public opinion—through oratory and authorship—they could be expected to realise Shibli's dream of leading the Indo-Muslim community.

The first clear[3] indication about what Shibli was really aiming at was given in April 1910 by his young and self-confident colleague, Abul Kalam Azad. He wrote a long article on "Nadva-tul-Ulama and the Goal of the Indian Muslims" and, after emphasising that the modern education had produced nothing except "job-hunters," pointed out that the only hope for the Indian Muslims lay in following the lead of the Nadva-tul-Ulama. In a well-phrased article, which appeared in *Al-Nadvah*, the official organ of the Nadvah, he said:

"All examinations of the causes of our decline and decay lead to the conclusion that there is nobody to shepherd our confused and dispersed flock. But the group of people which the school at Nadva-tul-Ulama is producing, through its education and training, will bring together and lead this flock which has lost its way." [Translated from Urdu.]

This article roused suspicion amongst some supporters of Aligarh, and one of them replied with an article, "Another Attack on Aligarh". A controversy started in the press, but shrewd and tactful Shibli calmed the ruffled waters by saying that the Nadvah was not opposed to Aligarh, and had, in fact, received continuous support from Syed Ahmad Khan, Syed Mahmud, Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Viqar-ul-Mulk.

Nearly two years later, on the annulment of the partition of Bengal, Viqar-ul-Mulk wrote his famous article, which marked the beginning of a far-reaching change in the political policy so long associated with Aligarh. About this time, Turkey, which was then the principal Muslim power in the world, was in serious

3. Critical references to Aligarh leadership in private conversation and correspondence had started much earlier. Some letters of 1902 are severely critical of Hali's sympathetic biography of Syed Ahmad Khan. The *Aligarh Gazette* for 21 March 1903 contains an anonymous letter from a correspondent from Hyderabad reproducing critical remarks of a former Professor of Aligarh College regarding the institution and those in charge (*Baqiyat-i Shibli*, pp. 180–84).

In a way Shibli had unfolded his concept of the high role of the *ulama* in his first address to the Nadvah (1894), but then this role was confined to the religious and intellectual spheres and was claimed for all qualified *ulama*. Now they claim for the guidance of the Muslims *in all spheres*, and this was to be provided by those who were trained by Shibli at the Nadva-tul-Ulama.

difficulties, and as they were attributed to the policy of the British Foreign Minister, Sir Edward Grey, the Indian Muslims were bitter against the British Government. In the new atmosphere, Shibli aud Abul Kalam Azad felt that the time had at length come to make a bid for the leadership of Muslim India. Azad started *Al-Hilal* with which we shall deal in the next chapter, and Shibli also embarked on a new era of brilliant political writings in prose and in verse.

In some of his poems, he gave expression to the poignant grief at the troubles of Turkey and criticised Western powers which had started a new "Crusade" against the Muslims. In others, he used a deft pen to pour ridicule over many things, which had the support of Syed Ahmad Khan and his successors. One of them was the All-India Muslim League, which in 1913 changed its objective to "*Suitable* Self-Government for India". Of course, there was nothing new about the qualification which the League leaders wished to impose on the constitution of the self-governing India. Since 1883, the Muslim leadership had urged that the Muslims would get very poor representation under an unmodified system of democratic elections, and had always stood for arrangements *specially suited* to this subcontinent. But Shibli said that the qualification of "*suitability*" was simply a cloak for old loyalist policy, and wrote many effective poems which are remarkable for a light touch, beautiful phrasing and subtle sarcasm. The same is true of his poems about the proposed university at Aligarh. With their satirical poems and articles, Shibli and Abul Kalam Azad made it impossible for the Aligarh authorities of the day to establish the university on the lines acceptable to Government, and its inauguration had to be postponed for many years.

In all these poems there were veiled and occasionally unveiled attacks on the ideals and policy associated with Aligarh. Syed Ahmad Khan and his successors had urged that it was in Muslim interests to be loyal to the Government in power. Shibli called this a slavish mentality and referred to Aligarh College as "An Institution for Training in Slavery". He did not realise, as Viqar-ul-Mulk stated, that loyalty to Government was not an

"end" but a "means"—to the welfare of the Muslims—and when Muslim interests required a change in the policy, Aligarh leaders were the first to advocate it and, as later events proved, men educated at Aligarh—Muhammad Ali, Shaukat Ali, and Zafar Ali Khan—were in the vanguard of anti-British movement.

In his criticism of Aligarh, Shibli was occasionally less than fair, but in those days of emotional frenzy this did not lessen the appeal of his poems and articles. They were beautiful, masterly utterances and went home. It appeared likely that Shibli's dream of his Nadvah replacing Aligarh in the leadership of Muslim India was about to be fulfilled, but just when the cup of Shibli's desires was brimful, it was snatched from his hands. Shibli, by his intellectual powers, ability to plan ahead and self-sacrifices, was well qualified for the leadership of Indian Muslims, but he had some personal handicaps also. His religious views were considered heterodox and, in some matters, he behaved in a manner which may not be embarrassing for a poet or an artist, but which did not enhance his reputation as a leader of a religious movement. He was also haughty and touchy and soon his colleagues at Nadvah combined to get rid of him. He himself provided the opportunity. In 1913, he took disciplinary action against a colleague of his for writing an article on "Jihad". This led to a strong agitation against him, and Shibli, who possibly thought that he would be considered indispensable by the Nadvah, tendered his resignation. It was readily accepted, and Shibli's opponents successfully resisted all attempts he made to stage a come-back.

Shibli died within a year of this, but before he died, this gifted, industrious, restless being had established, at Azamgarh, an Academy of Authors (Dar-ul-Musannifin) which continues to propagate the ideas with which he was associated during his latter years. His political mission was carried on—with greater extremism than Shibli was capable of—by Abul Kalam Azad, who was the moving spirt, in 1919, behind the organisation of Jamia-tul-Ulama-i Hind to carry out the political activities which Shibli wanted Nadva-tul-Ulama to undertake.

We shall deal with the career of Abul Kalam Azad in the next chapter, but it may be useful to sum up Shibli's specific con-

tributions to the political history of Muslim India. Shibli was the first Indian Muslim of modern times who discovered the value of making religion the basis of political appeal. He is the original author of the war-cry, which became so prominent in subsequent Indo-Muslim politics—"Islam in Danger". Syed Ahmad Khan was deeply interested in religion, and he was also the political leader of his people, but he kept religion and politics apart. Referring to his and similar efforts, Shibli said in an Urdu speech, delivered at an annual gathering of the Nadvah:

"For the last thirty years, efforts have been made to uplift the Muslims in the name of nationhood, but the failure of these efforts is only too obvious. The followers of the Prophet do not respond to the call of nationhood. Appeal to them in the name of religion, and you will see what a splendid response you get!"[4]

His first address to the Nadva-tul-Ulama was delivered in 1894, i.e. four years before he left Aligarh College. He exhorted the *ulama* to organise themselves under the aegis of the Nadvah, and said:

"Gentlemen! In the days of the Muslim rule the worldly as well as the religious affairs of the Muslims were in the hands of the *ulama*. In addition to indicating regulations regarding prayer, fasting, etc., the *ulama* decided judicial cases. They punished criminals and passed orders, awarding capital punishment or ransom. In short, the reins of the affairs of the community relating both to this and the next world were in the hands of the *ulama*. Now that things have changed, and worldly affairs have come under the authority of [the British] Government, we have to see what relationship the *ulama* have with the community, viz. what powers have been taken over by the Government, and what have been left over and are within the domain of the *ulama*, in which Government itself does not wish to interfere.

"Owing to the present condition of the *ulama*, their seclusion or rather indifference, it is generally felt that the link which they retain with the community is merely religious, i.e. they indicate the regulations concerning prayer, fasting, etc. Other affairs are believed to be outside their purview, in which they have no right of interference. I believe this to be wrong and totally wrong."[5]

He explained at length that the moral life of the Muslims,

4. Quoted in Syed Suleman's biography of Shibli, op. cit., p. 502.
5. *Khutubat-i Shibli*, p. 29.

their education and scholarship, their customs and conventions and their intellectual life were even now under the influence of the *ulama*, and after giving some details, said: "From this it would be seen that a very large part of the national life is in *ulama's* right of ownership (*haqq-i malkiyat*) and they alone have or can have absolute sway (*mutliq-ul-inan*) over it." [6]

He exhorted the religious leaders to organise themselves under the aegis of the Nadvah, and painted an impressive picture of the day when all this would be achieved:

"The Nadvah would then be so powerful that the entire Muslim community will be governed by its injunctions. People will have to bow to the religious verdicts of the Nadvah, and will be powerless to defy its decisions." [7]

The Nadvah did not fulfil Shibli's dreams of acquiring "absolute sway" over the Muslim community. In fact, things became so difficult for him that he had to leave the institution. But this determined dreamer did not give in. He now turned to his real source of strength—the power of the pen—to gain his object. He was the leading man of letters in Muslim India, and he decided to set up an Academy of Authors (Dar-ul-Musannifin) so that at least his ideas may dominate the people. After describing his plans, he wrote in a letter of November 1913:

"In India there are Anjumans [Associations] for everything, but an Anjuman of authors is still lacking and this is the most important need. *An able author can rule over the minds of thousands of people.*" (Translated from Urdu; emphasis ours.)

Shibli did not live very long after that, but before he died he had laid the firm foundation of an Academy of Authors at his native place, Azamgarh. He endowed his family bungalow and garden to house the Academy, donated his library, and put forward an elaborate scheme for a detailed biography of the Prophet, which brought ample financial assistance from the Begum of Bhopal to enable the organisation to function. He died before the Dar-ul-Musannifin went into production, but Syed Suleman Nadvi, his devoted though conservative successor, carried out the project most efficiently. The Dar-ul-Musannifin

6. Ibid., p. 30. 7. Ibid., p. 33.

became the leading literary centre of Muslim India, and the *Ma'arif*, its mouth-piece, became the most influential scholarly journal of the community. Shibli's dream of intellectual sway over his people was, after all, realised. This was facilitated by the fact that, although Aligarh produced great political leaders and a large number of able administrators, it totally failed to maintain Syed Ahmad's traditions of intellectual leadership. The result was that, not only owing to two divergent schools of thought attempting to lead Muslims in different directions, ground was prepared for what Ian Stephens calls "a sort of schizophrenia" in the mind of Muslim India (and now of Pakistan) but that owing to the intellectual dominance of the group led by Shibli, for a long time the noblest sons of Aligarh, like Maulanas Muhammad Ali, Shaukat Ali and Zafar Ali Khan, echoed his thought and followed his policies rather than those of Syed Ahmad Khan. Even Iqbal was deeply influenced.

As Shibli wrote, "an able author can rule over the minds of thousands of people". The influence of Shibli and his successors over Muslims in India and Pakistan has been tremendous, but it did not prove decisive at crucial moments. The powers of the modern propaganda are well known, but its limitations need not be ignored. Writing about the old dialectitians Hali wrote in his *Musaddas*, "If they set out to prove the day to be night, they will not rest content until they have silenced all dissent." Gifted men have great persuasive power, but their success can only be temporary if their arguments do not rest on a solid basis of facts. One may argue well and effectively about the day being night, but when the dawn breaks and the sun shines, only the hypnotised ones can cling to the illusion of a starry night. Perhaps, the great era of the success of Shibli's political ideas was the period which began with the publication of *Al-Hilal* and ended with Mustafa Kamal's abrogation of the Caliphate (1912–1923). During this period the Ottoman Caliphate was involved in its death agonies, while the constitutional development within the country had not reached a stage where wisdom of Syed Ahmad Khan's political policy could become manifest. The Khilafat movement marked the climax of this era, but anti-climax was also near at

hand. This was provided by Mustafa Kamal's abrogation of the Caliphate, but even before this, the focus of Muslim India's romantic phantasies—nourished with such skill and depth of feeling by Shibli and his group—had moved, and the events nearer home were having a sobering effect. Those who have read, in Allamah Mashriqi's *Tazkirah*, the harrowing details of what was suffered, through hunger, cold and disease, by those who, relying on the *fatwas* in favour of Hijrat, blocked the road to Kabul, will not be surprised at the subsequent disillusionment with *ulama's* leadership. Even otherwise, the Hindu-Muslim animosity, which was brought to light in the Punjab after a partial transfer of power under Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, brought home to many that Syed Ahmad Khan and his successors had not been far wrong in the political policy advocated by them. These happenings dealt a shattering blow to the prestige of those political *ulama* who, since the last years of Shibli, had given overriding, almost exclusive, importance to the happenings in Turkey and had poohpoohed those who were struggling to safeguard and improve the Muslim position in the Indian subcontinent.

The situation did not change twenty-five years later, when, during the struggle for Pakistan, the vast majority of politically-minded *ulama*, headed by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani, ranged themselves against the Muslim League leadership. Muslim masses instinctively realised what was at stake, and solidly lined up behind Quaid-i Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

The political policy and programme of Shibli and his successors did not prevail at crucial moments, but his ideas—some of which have got enshrined in Iqbal's poetry—continue to float in the air and attract doughty champions. The most determined of these is Maulana Abul Ala Maududi who, through his concept of Islamic State, hopes to get all the authority and influence for the *ulama* for which Shibli laboured in vain.

Shibli, Abul Kalam Azad and Abul Ala Maududi form an unbroken chain.

Chapter 9

ABUL KALAM AZAD
(1888–1958)

SHIBLI had prepared his plans thoroughly and carefully but the hesitancy of a dual personality and certain weaknesses of character hampered his work. These deficiencies were supplied by Abul Kalam Azad. He brought to the execution of these schemes a rhetorical skill, a tenacity of purpose and an audacity all his own, but, in essence, the path he followed had been chalked out by his predecessor. It is true that the young man, in his supreme self-confidence, went beyond what Shibli had planned—and to that extent cut himself adrift from his people—but, in general, the direction and the course of his journey had already been indicated.

Abul Kalam's early days are wrapped up in mystery. His admirers have tried so hard to turn him into a legend that possibly there has been some embellishing of the records. It is not certain, for example, what his real name is. He has been variously called as Ahmad and Mohy-ud-Din, but in his earliest letter on record, he has signed himself "Ghulam Mohy-ud-Din".[1] The same mystery surrounds his father. It has been stated that he left India after the Revolt of 1857, that the Nawab of Rampur was his spiritual disciple, that he was called to Constantinople by Sultan Abdul Hamid. Nobody has elaborated or even investigated these details, and one is at a handicap in correctly assessing the background of so important and intriguing a personality.

From the stray bits of information which have been vouchsafed to the general public, it is, however, possible to infer that the Maulana's father, who was a theologian as well as a *Pir*, left Bombay towards the end of the last century and settled in Mecca,

1. See Safdar, Ed., *Muraqqa-ul-Adab*, p. 56.

where the Maulana was born in 1888. His father returned to India ten years later, and took up residence at Calcutta, as he had a number of disciples in Bengal. Azad was brought up in a religious atmosphere, and was educated on old Islamic lines.

Azad's father was one of the influential *Pirs* who correspond in spiritual realm to the landed aristocracy in mundane matters, and if he had wanted he could have lived comfortably on the offerings and homage of his father's disciples. The self-reliant child, however, spurned this course at any early age and resolved to make a name by his pen. He was, by all accounts, a precocious child. He wanted to write a life of Ghazali when he was only twelve. Two years later, he was contributing learned articles to *Makhzan*, the best known literary magazine of the day. One of them was (characteristically) about the power and influence of the press and another was an instalment from his proposed history of Persian poetry. He had also started attending national gatherings and the elder leaders were amazed at seeing this prodigy. From his serious literary undertakings, they had thought that he must be a grown-up person, but now they were confronted with a boy of sixteen. Hali, it is said, when first introduced to Abul Kalam, took him to be the son of the learned writer of that name, whose articles he had seen and admired!

At one of these gatherings, Azad came across Shibli, and a meeting took place, which meant so much to both of them. Azad belonged to a religious family, but was more interested in politics, literature, journalism and similar subjects. Shibli did not belong to a family of religious *ulama*, but was concentrating his energies on their organisation on modern lines. There was much in common between the two and there is no doubt that the precocious young man fascinated Shibli. The letters which he later wrote to Abul Kalam Azad were withheld at the time of the first publication of *Makatib-i Shibli*, but they have now been included in the second edition, and anybody who reads them can see how fond Shibli was of Abul Kalam Azad. He took him to Lucknow where Azad stayed at the Nadvah for some time, edited *An-Nadvah*, the official organ of the institution, and joined Shibli in intimate discussions on intellectual, political and religious subjects. Syed

Suleman, who was at Nadvah about the same time, says that it was Shibli who made a "Maulana" of Abul Kalam Azad, brought him prominently before the public by offering him editorship of *An-Nadvah*, and influenced his political views in pan-Islamic and pro-Congress directions.

Abul Kalam Azad was, by now, well known in national circles, and wanted to start a newspaper of his own, to wield the influence which he had stated in an article he published at the age of fourteen belonged to the press in the West. For this, however, he had to wait for some time, and he used the interval to equip himself more fully for his self-imposed mission. In 1906, he took up the editorship of *Vakil* of Amritsar, a bi-weekly, which wielded considerable influence during those days. In 1909, his father died after having appointed Abul Kalam Azad as his successor. He now left Amritsar, and carried on, for some days, the work of his father, first in Bombay and later at Calcutta. At the same time, he continued his literary activities and preparations for the publication of his long-contemplated newspaper.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had to wait for some years for the publication of his own newspaper, but the delay, instead of being a hindrance, helped him. The publication of *Al-Hilal*—the first issue came out on 13 July 1912—was singularly well-timed. Muslim India was in a ferment and in a mood to be swayed by an emotional appeal. Viqar-ul-Mulk's speeches and writings—after the Delhi Durbar—had marked the end of the policy of political quietism and reliance on Government. His lead had been energetically followed by two young Aligarhians—Zafar Ali Khan in the Punjab and Maulana Muhammad Ali at Calcutta. The ground had been fully prepared by these three, and the growing difficulties of Turkey had perturbed the people even more than the annulment of the partition of Bengal.

Al-Hilal was not only fortunate in the time of its appearance, but it had all the auxiliary attractions, which enhance the appeal of a newspaper. Muhammad Ali's *Comrade*, started some eighteen months earlier, had set a high standard in Muslim journalism, and Abul Kalam Azad was determined to excel that. He succeeded. His "weekly" was printed on thin art paper, in the best Beyrut

type, and was copiously illustrated. The Muslim reading public had not seen anything like this before, and was naturally thrilled.

Even more effective than the surrounding atmosphere and the get-up of the paper was the rhetorical skill and ability of the editor. The style of *Al-Hilal* has been recently criticised for its verbosity and obscurities and its appeal to the heart rather than to the head. The criticism is not unjust, and less gifted writers have shown how easy it is to imitate some of its undesirable features. The objections, however, did not damp the enthusiasm of the early readers of *Al-Hilal*. They were used to the humdrum, matter-of-fact prose of the other Urdu papers and Abul Kalam's style appeared like the language of a high-souled prophet. It completely swept them off their feet.

Abul Kalam also used his powers shrewdly. Viqar-ul-Mulk had abandoned the old Aligarh policy of reliance on Government, but he still urged a separate platform for Muslims, and was opposed to their joining the Congress. Abul Kalam differed from him but did not seriously challenge him on this point. He chose a more vulnerable spot in the armour of the opponent—indifference to the welfare of the Turks and other Muslims outside India—and concentrated on that. His own views on this subject are summed up in a letter which he wrote to a friend, shortly after he started *Al-Hilal*:

"Aligarh movement has paralysed the Muslims. The real aim is the promotion of Pan-Islam, which is the true foundation and link for the progress and reform of Islam, and, for this, there will never be a better opportunity than we have now. Today no local or national movement can benefit the Muslims, even if it be the tall talk of the [Aligarh] University. So long as the whole world of Islam does not come together in an international and universal alliance, how can small tracts help the forty crores of Muslims?" [2]

The greater part of *Al-Hilal* was devoted to articles and photographs about Turkey. Abul Kalam Azad concentrated on this question. He had seen, in the Punjab, how enthusiasm for Turkey had been created by the *Vatan*, the *Vakil* and the *Zamindar*, and knew that people would disown Aligarh more easily on

2. Quoted in Khwajah Hasan Nizami, *Ataliq-i Khutut Navisi* (4th Edn.), p. 34.

this point. Of course, there had been a great outburst of pro-Turkish feelings, even at Aligarh. But he was not satisfied. He even used the opportunity to remind people (in the fourth issue of *Al-Hilal*) of what Syed Ahmad had said against pro-Turkish demonstrations, and bitterly scolded the Aligarh leaders on their indifference to Muslims. Later he delivered a speech at Calcutta, which was printed in the form of a leaflet and widely circulated. In this he referred, without naming, but on lines which made his meaning obvious, to "those heretics and hypocrites who, during the last forty years, had co-operated with the Satans of Europe to weaken the influence of Islamic Caliphate and Pan-Islam".

Today, after the Indian Muslims have seen the poor outcome of their pro-Turkish efforts, they are beginning to think that there was much to be said for Syed Ahmad's policy, but in those days of emotional frenzy, nobody noticed this. Abul Kalam's emphasis on Pan-Islam, not only embittered the Muslim opinion against the Christian—including the British—Governments but also undermined the power and influence of the old Aligarh leaders.

Soon Abul Kalam had another occasion to cross swords with his opponents. A couple of years before, it had been decided to raise the Aligarh College to a University, and H.H. The Aga Khan, who took the lead in the matter, collected large sums needed for the purpose. Differences, however, arose between the promoters and the Government over the name of the University, Government power of veto and affiliation of Islamia colleges in the country to the proposed University. None of the promoters liked Government attitude on these points, but, as Shibli wrote in a letter to Abul Kalam, "something was better than nothing," and they began to explore lines on which a settlement could be achieved. Abul Kalam Azad, however, grasped that the promoters, by giving up their original stand, were offering an excellent target for attack, and in a series of articles, which rank as masterpieces, not of journalism but of satirical literature, he poured out refined scorn on this change of front. Maulana Muhammad Ali was picked out for some special attention. Soon the whole country joined the young editor of *Al-Hilal*. Viqar-ul-Mulk said that he had been misinformed, and Shibli also entered the lists on the side of his gifted junior, with

his effective satirical poems. Maulana Muhammad Ali—and a few others—tried to arrest the drift of opinion, but failed, and the ideas of a compromise with Government had to be shelved.

But Maulana Abul Kalam Azad did not achieve triumph simply by a skilful handling of the current political issues. He had a message—and on a point dear to every Muslim heart. This was the message of religious revivalism, and extension of religion to every phase of a Muslim's life. *Al-Hilal*, it has been said, had "religion" in one hand and "politics" in the other, and, in both, it professed to follow the Quran. "Back to the Quran" was its battle-cry. When somebody asked Abul Kalam Azad whether he followed the extremist or the moderate school of Indian politics, he ridiculed the very idea of Muslims following others in any matter. They were the chosen people of God and had their path clearly pointed out to them. So far as he was concerned, he said, he followed nothing but the Quran and urged all his co-religionists to do the same (*vide Al-Hilal*, 8 September 1912, etc.).

Today many have begun to see the weakness of this argument. Quotations from the Quran have been cited to support such completely contradictory standpoints that people are beginning to think that, although the Holy Book is most definite and clear on fundamentals of spiritual and moral regeneration of man, to cite it on problems on which it never professed to give any but general guidance, is to provide a dangerous weapon to clever interpreters. To *Al-Hilal*, the message of the Quran was one of complete independence of thought and action, but when in 1919 Martial Law was declared in some cities of the Punjab, big posters were put up at Lahore and other places, with quotations from the Quran enjoining on Muslims the observance of law and order. The way extracts from the Quran about dealing with the non-Muslims were splashed during the elections held in 1946 to successfully oppose the standpoint of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is only recent history. All this had shown to the honest and the thoughtful that the policy of appeal to the Quran in all matters is not so simple of application as Abul Kalam Azad had made it out to be. Similarly, as a critic has observed, the revivalism of *Al-Hilal* has done no lasting service to the cause of true religion. Azad was

able to kindle religious emotion, and make Muslims believe that they were the chosen people on the earth, but such supreme self-regard is hardly conducive to any spiritual reform or self-purification. This, however, is a later judgment. Thirty-seven years ago, the effect of the religious appeal was tremendous. Apart from the support which it gave to the views of Abul Kalam Azad, it had a general healthy effect too. People realised that the Quran contained guidance not only on "ablutions and prayers," but on the basic requirements and practical life of mankind, and thus a new significance and importance came to be attached to the study of the Holy Book.

A by-product of this policy was that the *ulama* began to take more active interest in political affairs of the community. Of course, in the past also, they had not been totally indifferent to the fortunes of their people, but formerly they intervened only at the time of a real crisis (like the denial of religious liberties to the Muslims under Sikh rule) when such intervention became a religious duty. Now Abul Kalam had held out that "politics" and "religion" were twins, and naturally this led to the religious leaders taking greater interest in politics. The beneficial effect of this development—both on religion and politics—was challenged even in the columns of *Al-Hilal*. It was urged by an influential correspondent that the devotion of religious leaders to politics would adversely affect their religious activities,[3] and experience has shown that in politics the *ulama* tend to become mere camp-followers of one clever politician or another. The participation of the *ulama* in political matters, however, made politics a much more living thing for the general masses, and Azad received powerful support from a very influential section of the community.

Abul Kalam's writings had a quickening effect on the religious life of the Indian Muslims. Of course, the vast majority of them had never been indifferent to religion, and years before the publication of *Al-Hilal*, Viqar-ul-Mulk had started at Aligarh an era of religious orthodoxy and strictness which could not but affect the

3. *Al-Hilal*, 8 October 1918, p. 280.

attitude of the younger generation. But Abul Kalam approached the problem with a new vigour, and brought to his policy of making religion the basis of all things the aid of a powerful pen. This led to a religious revival, and in the new atmosphere of faith and enthusiasm, the apologetic attitude of Syed Ahmad Khan towards some aspects of Islam, and his endeavours to conform Islam to modern sciences lost their appeal.

In the realm of domestic politics Abul Kalam Azad did not directly challenge the proposal of Viqar-ul-Mulk that the Muslims should continue to have a separate platform. He very rarely wrote on this subject and one would search in vain the bulky files of *Al-Hilal* and *Al-Bilagh* to find a single article on "Hindu-Muslim Relations" or such subjects as the "Future of Muslims in India". The editor of *Al-Hilal* would appear never to have been really interested in Muslim India, but one of the articles on a contemporary controversy, incidentally, contains a few vigorous remarks on the Hindu-Muslim question, which assume importance in view of the later history of the Maulana. In an article dealing with the conversion of Ismaili Hindus, he writes:

"There is no need to fear the Hindus. You should only fear God. You are soldiers of God, but you have discarded the uniform bestowed by God on you. Wear it and the whole world will be afraid of you. If you wish to stay in India, and remain alive, you should embrace your neighbours. You have seen the results of staying away from them; now you should join hands with them. If there is obstruction on their side, do not care. You have to see what your position is in the nations of the world. You are the vicegerents of God on earth. So, like God, you should see all others from above. Even if other nations do not treat you nicely, you should treat them well. The elders forgive the mistakes of their juniors. They do not resent, and scream, even if they are tormented by them."[4]

The period of Abul Kalam Azad's journalistic activities came to an end after some three and a half years. In 1914, the First Great War started, and, on account of certain pro-German articles and photographs, the security of Al-Hilal Press was forfeited, and it was asked to deposit another sum of Rs 10,000. On

4. Ibid., 1 September 1911, pp. 2–3.

this *Al-Hilal* ceased publication, but soon the Maulana started another weekly—*Al-Bilagh*. This also came to an end in March 1916, when the Maulana was externed from Bengal. He settled near Ranchi, where he was later interned under the Defence of India Ordinance, till his release under the Royal Amnesty of 1920. The Maulana employed his forced idleness at Ranchi in literary and religious pursuits, but except for the *Tazkirah*—which is also a fragment—none of the literary efforts of this period has seen the light of the day.

When the Maulana was released, the whole country was in a ferment, as it had never been, since the days of the Great Revolt. The Muslims were perturbed over "the Khilafat wrongs" and the Hindus were unhappy over the Rowlatt Act and "the Punjab excesses". Both joined hands in a powerful agitation. This was the very fulfilment of Abul Kalam's dreams and on his release he threw himself wholeheartedly into the new movement. He joined the Khilafat Committee, the Congress, and had a hand in organising the Jamia-tul-Ulama. This happy state of affairs was, however, not to last very long. Soon there was a split in the Congress on the question of Council entry, and the Maulana was asked to preside over the special session of the All-India National Congress, held to consider the question in 1923. The difficulty was solved by the Swarajists being allowed a certain freedom of action, but general conditions in the country continued to deteriorate. Shuddhi and Sangthan movements had been started a year earlier, and were followed by serious Hindu-Muslim riots at Multan and other places. Affairs outside the country were not more propitious. Mustafa Kamal Pasha had frustrated the anti-Turkish designs of Lloyd George and others, but he also abolished the Caliphate, to which Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and (as a result of his advocacy) Indian Muslims had attached so much religious significance. The decision of the Angora Republic naturally meant a death-blow to the Khilafat movement and before long the Khilafat leaders had to choose other platforms. Maulana Muhammad Ali stuck to the effete Khilafat Committee for some time and later drifted back to the Muslim camp, which was now looking more and more towards internal affairs, and gradually realising the soundness of Syed

Ahmad's policy. This, however, Abul Kalam Azad, with his life-long opposition to the Aligarh ideals, could not do, and chose the All-India National Congress. These were bitter days for the leaders, who had preached allegiance to the Turkish Caliph since 1912, and, in despair, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad turned more and more to literature and scholarly pursuits. In 1927, he re-started *Al-Hilal* but it was a flop, and had to cease publication within six months. He now devoted more of his time to the commentary and translation of the Holy Quran. Two volumes of this work have so far been published, and although they do not satisfy the expectations which one could reasonably have from the maturer years of the editor of *Al-Hilal*, yet, as someone has said, anything from the pen of Abul Kalam Azad is a treat and *Tarjuman-ul-Quran* is no exception. It is written in a much simpler language than was employed in the pages of *Al-Hilal*—probably reflecting the change from a Pan-Islamic to a nationalist standpoint—and, though normally Abul Kalam's style is too diffuse to make him a good translator, he has evaded this problem by offering not a simple rendering of the Holy Book but an "Explanatory Translation". The long introduction also marks a change from the standpoint of *Al-Hilal*, as, instead of showing Muslims "the chosen" people of the world, he holds out Islam to be a universal religion, and supports his thesis with numerous quotations from the Quran.

Abul Kalam Azad was living in this literary retirement, when something happened which marked the beginning of another era of energetic political activity. In 1937, Dr Ansari died. He had been, since the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan, Mahatma Gandhi's adviser on the Muslim question, and now it became necessary to find another Muslim who should also be a devoted nationalist, for filling his place. No person of all-India repute, except Abul Kalam Azad, was available, and so he stepped into Ansari's shoes. As on account of the pending constitutional changes, the question of the Muslim rights assumed increasing importance, and as the Muslim League effected a triumphant return in the Indian politics, Maulana Abul Kalam came to occupy a key position in the affairs of the country. He was elected President of the Indian National Congress in 1938, and as, owing to World War II,

very few sessions of the Congress were held—and prominent Congress leaders were in custody for three years—he continued to occupy this office for almost eight crucial years. In his presidential address delivered in 1940 at the Ramgarh session of the All-India National Congress, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad dealt at length with the question of "The Muslims of India and the Future of the Country," and as the views expressed therein represent not only the viewpoint of the Maulana, but the political creed of Dr Zakir Husain and the Jamiah group, the Jamia-tul-Ulama leaders, the Momins, and the nationalist leaders like Syed Mahmud, Syed Abdullah Brevli, and many others, it may not be out of place to give a lengthy extract. He said:

"Do we, Indian Musalmans, view the free India of the future with suspicion and distrust or with courage and confidence? If we view it with fear and suspicion, then undoubtedly we have to follow a different path. No present declaration, no promise for the future, no constitutional safeguards, can be a remedy for our doubts and fears. We are, then, forced to tolerate the existence of a third power. This third power is already entrenched here and has no intention of withdrawing and if we follow this path of fear, we must needs look forward to its continuance. But if we are convinced that for us fear and doubt have no place, and that we must view the future with courage and confidence in ourselves, then our course of action becomes absolutely clear. We find ourselves in a new world, which is free from the dark shadows of doubt, vacillation, inaction and apathy, and where the light of faith and determination, action and enthusiasm, never fails. The confusions of the time, the ups and downs that come our way, the difficulties that beset our thorny path cannot change the direction of our steps. It becomes our bounden duty, then, to march with assured steps to India's national goal."

It is easy to pick holes in this line of argument. It is also possible, now, after the advent of Indian Independence, to point to numberless happenings and developments, which show the hope expressed above to have been illusory. The urge to quote irrefutable facts and figures is natural, but perhaps it may be best to hold one's judgment. Since 15 August 1947, the Indian Muslims have seen many very dark days and their position has steadily deteriorated, but will this state of affairs continue indefinitely? Will the evil forces, which cost Mahatma Ghandi

his life, finally overwhelm the forces of good, fairplay, statesmanship and justice ? Time alone can give a final answer, but the welfare not only of five crores of Indian Muslims but of India demands that it should be a firm negative.

During his long term of office as President of the Indian National Congress the Maulana, along with other important Congress leaders, was interned for three years, in Ahmednagar Fort. As usual, he spent this forced leisure in literary pursuits. Out of what he wrote during this period, *Ghubar-i Khatir* has seen the light of the day. It purports to be a collection of letters, addressed (not delivered) to a friend, but in reality it is a *tour de force* of a literary craftsman. In this book the Maulana has picked up seemingly insignificant subjects as "pegs" for his thoughts, but he brings such a mature mind to their consideration, and has treated them with such artistic skill that the book has all the features of a literary masterpiece. The book is also interesting for the insight it gives into the Maulana's mind and the changes it has undergone since the days of *Al-Hilal* and *Tazkirah*. In his earlier writings the Maulana led the reaction against the Aligarh movement. He was the champion of the old against the new, of religious revivalism against rationalism of Syed Ahmad, of Pan-Islam against regional efforts, of the theory of Muslims being the chosen people of God against the view that the remorseless laws of Nature are same for all and that the Muslims will have to borrow from others —particularly the West—if they want to hold their own. The Maulana may or may not have realised this, but a careful study of *Ghubar-i Khatir*, and his other contemporary writings shows that the Maulana's outlook had greatly changed. It is not easy to recognise the youthful, enthusiastic, over-confident, Pan-Islamist editor of *Al-Hilal* in the mature, cosmopolitan savant who wrote these letters in Ahmednagar Fort. In matters other than religious, he had already abandoned the creed of revivalism. In his presidential address at Ramgarh Congress, he had stated : "I am one of those who believe that revivalism may be a necessity in a religion, but in social matters it is a denial of progress."

But *Ghubar-i Khatir* shows that even with regard to religion, he has moved away from his original stand. One of the fundamen-

tal points of difference between Syed Ahmad Khan and the orthodox Muslims was that he regarded prayer (دعا) merely as a form of devotion, and did not believe in its power "to move mountains" or alter the course of things. In the days of *Al-Hilal*, Abul Kalam also championed the orthodox point of view. But *Ghubar-i Khatir* shows that his views have undergone a reorientation, and come very close to Syed Ahmad's stand. In its pages the Maulana ridicules those *ulama* of al-Azhar who in 1791 hoped to stop Napoleon's advance in Egypt by chanting *Sahih Bukhari*, and the Emir of Bokhara who some years later wished to defeat the Russians by having *Khatm-i Khwajgan* in mosques and *Madrasahs*.[5] The Maulana makes it clear that this was not the attitude of the Muslims in the heyday of their glory and contrasts the blind fanaticism of the Christian crusaders with the realism and resources of Muslims facing them:

"Europe was the champion of religious fanaticism. The Muslims stood for science and reason. Europe wished to fight with the weapons of prayer, while the Muslims were fighting with the weapons of steel and fire."[6]

During the struggle for Pakistan, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was ranged against the Muslim League leadership, and became unpopular with the vast majority of his co-religionists. After 1947, he became the undisputed leader of the Indian Muslims. Prime Minister Nehru greatly respected him, and both worked together to give some reality to India's claim of secularism, against Sardar Patel's hidden and open onslaughts. When the Maulana passed away on 22 February 1958, according to the newspaper reports, Nehru wept in public. Towards the end, the Maulana's attitude towards Syed Ahmad Khan seems to have changed, and he paid him a high tribute, while addressing the students of the Muslim University, Aligarh. Even on the question of safeguards for Muslims his opinion seems to have undergone a certain change. K.L. Panjabi, the biographer of Patel, writes, "When the Constitution was on the anvil, even Maulana Azad was at first in favour of reservation of seats for Muslims. But Sardar had skilfully managed the Muslim members of the Minority Committee and

5. *Ghubar-i Khatir*, p. 167. 6. Ibid., p. 164.

they had agreed to forgo the reservation of seats."[7] A paragraph appearing in *The Pioneer* gives a slightly different version of the developments, and though satirical of Maulana's efforts, and obviously biased, underlines the change in his point of view. When the Separate Electorates were abolished by the Indian Constituent Assembly, the Maulana was absent, as he had left for Kashmir. Even in the Minority Committee which recommended this course, he remained neutral (along with Maulana Hifzur Rahman). *The Pioneer* of Lucknow, however, hinted that it was due to Maulana's lobbying that Muslim members of Madras opposed the abolition of communal representation and separate electorates:

"Prior to his departure for Kashmir, Maulana Sahib, for the first time, was seen taking active interest in Parliamentary affairs. He often visited the lobbies and was seen closeted with Muslim members from Madras. It may, however, be a pure accident that the Madras Muslim members became the stoutest opponents of the Minority Committee's report. Tajammul Hussain obliquely hinted that someone high up had been instigating the Muslims not to trust Hindus, who could never change their narrow-minded communalism. The advice given to the Muslims was to stick to reservation."[8]

Towards Pakistan and her leaders, the Maulana's attitude was dignified and statesmanlike. Abdul Majid Daryabadi, by no means a friend or admirer of Abul Kalam Azad, recalls a private gathering of 1948, when among others a son of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was present. "Towards his opponents, particularly the Muslim League, there was not a trace of complaint or criticism in what Maulana said. References to all were equally well-mannered. With regard even to Pakistan instead of complaints or sneers, there was goodwill, and some words like, 'Now that it has come into existence, everybody's interest lies in its being strong and stable'."[9] Shortly after Maulana's death, an English book, *India Wins Freedom* appeared, based on his Urdu account as translated and edited by Humayun Kabir. It suffers

7. K.L. Panjabi, *The Indomitable Sardar*, p. 214.
8. *The Pioneer*, Lucknow, dated 1 June 1949.
9. *Vide* Anwar Arif, Ed., *Abul Kalam Azad*, p. 40.

from the disadvantages inseparable from imperfect translation of the work of a great stylist, which he did not revise or check up, but the book gives useful information regarding the political history of the subcontinent at a crucial period.

In the fifty years of his public career, Abul Kalam Azad saw much, suffered much, and changed a great deal. The author of *Ghubar-i Khatir* and *Tarjuman-ul-Quran* is not the fiery youth who edited *Al-Hilal* or wrote *Tazkirah*. But by a strange irony, the vision that has caught the imagination of the people has come out of the pages of *Al-Hilal*, and Abul Kalam Azad, who has been really effective in the history of Muslim India, is emotional, revivalistic, Pan-Islamist, anti-modern, anti-intellectual. The forces which he set in motion in 1913 are being consolidated and led today by Maulana Maududi, the leader of Jamaat-i Islami. All those who want Pakistan to be a theocracy may or may not realise it, but they are following the path originally shown by the gifted editor of *Al-Hilal*. The leaders of the movement are conscious of this, and, as recently as in 1946, some of them expressed the hope that the Maulana who, in 1913, set the goal of *Hukumat-i Ilahiyah* before Muslim India would take over their leadership. In a symposium on the subject, the editor gives long quotations from the pages of *Al-Hilal* and concludes:

"Amongst those interested in the establishment of a theocracy [*Hukumat-i Ilahiyah*] will there be anyone who will have no love for the very first champion of this idea, and would not desire to see the leadership of the movement once again in his hands? Would to God that the blessed day would come—and come very soon—when Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Abul Ala Maududi, Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani, and Mufti Kifayat Ullah may all be seen in the same line!" [10]

The four leaders mentioned in this passage were either indifferent or opposed to the establishment of Pakistan. Certainly Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has been a consistent opponent of the political leadership, which first secured various safeguards for the Muslims and later carved out a big territory for them out of the

10. *Hukumat-i Ilahiyah aur Ulama-o-Mufakkarin* (Hyderabad-Deccan), p. 190.

Indo-Pakistan subcontinent. But history is full of ironies. If Maulana Maududi and his co-workers succeed, Pakistan will be governed, not by the ideals of Syed Ahmad Khan, Iqbal and Jinnah, but by those inspired by Abul Kalam Azad!

Chapter 10

MAULANA MUHAMMAD ALI
(1878–1931)

NOTHING can bring out more prominently the confusion which prevailed in Muslim politics from 1912 to 1937, the tempestuous passions of the period, and the very poor results of mighty efforts, than a study of the life of Maulana Muhammad Ali, who dominated the national stage for the greater part of this period. The policy of depending on the British to safeguard the interests of the Muslims, which was the sheet anchor of Syed Ahmad and Mohsin-ul-Mulk, was dead by the end of 1911. Annulment of the partition of Bengal had killed it and Viqar-ul-Mulk had read the funeral oration. No intelligent, living, realistic policy had, however, yet taken its place. Viqar-ul-Mulk had, no doubt, advocated a policy of self-reliance, but the plant of Muslim political life was yet of too feeble a growth and the future developments too uncertain and hazy to provide an active, visible course of action. Besides, no statesman with the constructive ability of Syed Ahmad or Mohsin-ul-Mulk was available to make the new policy a real success. The resultant confusion and uncertainty facilitated the task of leaders like Shibli and Abul Kalam Azad, who diverted the attention of the Indian Muslims from their own affairs to matters outside the country, and for many a long year Muslim India followed the Turkish will-o'-the-wisp.

Maulana Muhammad Ali was born in 1878. He was an infant when his father passed away, but a wise mother gave a thorough education to him and his two brothers. In due course he reached Aligarh, where his "Big Brother," Shaukat Ali, was the idol of the cricket crowds. Muhammad Ali also took part in games, but he distinguished himself better in studies and in the degree examination headed the list of successful candidates from U.P. He was, however, not a *persona grata* with the European staff, as both

in the classroom and the debating hall of the Union, he displayed an uncompromising independence and was not easily amenable to discipline. Syed Sajjad Hyder, who was his contemporary at College, says that the principal heaved a sigh of relief when this self-willed young man left Aligarh for higher studies in England.

Muhammad Ali entered Oxford University and started preparing for the Indian Civil Service. He, however, was unsuccessful and, after a brief interlude, in which he returned to India for a short time to get married, he got an Honours Degree at Oxford and finally returned home in 1902. On his arrival in India, he wished to join the staff of the Aligarh College. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk supported his application, but Theodore Morrison, who knew him in his College days, strongly opposed the proposal and ultimately he was not taken. This could not have endeared the European principal to the brilliant young man.

Now, Muhammad Ali turned to Indian states, and after a short spell at Rampur got a high appointment in Baroda. He served in all for seven years in Baroda, and filled many places with distinction. Political and journalistic interests were, however, constantly tempting him and, while in service, he took part in many affairs outside the state. He was a frequent contributor to *The Times of India* and his *Thoughts on the Present Discontent* saw the light of the day about this time. He was also present at the foundation of the All-India Muslim League at Dacca, and, at the suggestion of Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Viqar-ul-Mulk, wrote an account of this historic event in a pamphlet entitled *Green Book*. His interest in Aligarh affairs was more direct and effective. He actively supported the College students, who were growing impatient under the disciplinary measures imposed by the European staff, and the Enquiry Commision, which was appointed to report on the College strike of 1907, referred to his articles as a contributory cause of the step taken by the students.

Maulana Muhammad Ali managed to keep himself in touch with Muslim affairs, even while in the state service, but it is not surprising that in course of time difficulties arose, and he felt that he needed a freer hand. He, therefore, left Baroda in 1910, and on 1 January 1911 started *Comrade* from Calcutta. It was a great

journalistic triumph. Muhammad Ali had made thorough preparations for the paper, and everything connected with it was of a high order. He himself wrote very well, and, with the help of a gifted band of young men, gave Muslim India the best English weekly it has ever had.

The Comrade played an important part in moulding the political policy of Muslim India. In assessing the influences which radically changed the outlook of Muslims about 1912, it is worth remembering that *The Comrade* was started more than eighteen months before Abul Kalam Azad's *Al-Hilal* saw the light of the day, and the pioneering work which this newspaper and the *Zamindar*, edited by Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, another Aligarhian, did has to be duly acknowledged. In most matters, Maulana Muhammad Ali agreed with Viqar-ul-Mulk, and his newspaper reflected the new era which had been inaugurated at Aligarh. In internal politics, its policy was dubbed as that of a "Communal Patriot". It was fearless in denouncing discrimination and hardships to which the editor's countrymen were exposed, but it also systematically criticised *The Bengalee*, *The Tribune* and other Hindu newspapers, which opposed the newly organised All-India Muslim League, or the efforts of Aligarh leaders to secure suitable safeguards for the Muslims. Maulana Muhammad Ali strongly supported the standpoint of Viqar-ul-Mulk, after the annulment of the partition of Bengal, and wrote a series of articles dealing with "The Announcement".

The Camrade was originally published from Calcutta, but when the seat of Government was shifted to Delhi, *Comrade* followed suit. Early in 1913, Maulana Muhammad Ali started an Urdu newspaper, *Hamdard*, with a view to reaching a still wider public.

In his unfinished autobiography, the Maulana says that when he started *The Comrade*, he did not think that he would have to devote much time and space to affairs outside India. Fate had, however, decreed otherwise. Soon after the publication of *The Comrade*, Turkey was involved in war, at first with Italy and later with the Balkan powers. The sympathies of Muslim India for the Turks were deeply stirred, but it is doubtful whether, but

for the vigorous lead given by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's *Al-Hilal*, the Turkish affairs would have so thoroughly absorbed Muhammad Ali—and the Indian Muslims.

Muhammad Ali was a distinguished alumnus of the Aligarh College, and had deep veneration for Syed Ahmad Khan, but his emotional nature readily responded to the religious revivalism and Pan-Islamic creed preached by Abul Kalam Azad. He not only echoed the sentiments expressed in *Al-Hilal*, but soon found concrete means to express them. During the Balkan War, he organised a Medical Mission which, under the leadership of Dr Ansari, visited Turkey and was the first "embassy of practical goodwill" sent by Muslim India to a foreign Muslim country.

The Comrade did not start with any bitterness towards the British Government, but the annulment of the partition of Bengal and the political tension engendered by the Tripoli and Balkan wars affected its attitude. Before long, there were other causes which fed the fires of hatred. The controversy about Muslim University was one, and, before it died down, there was serious trouble at Cawnpore after the demolition, by the Public Works Department, of the portion of a mosque. Maulana Muhammad Ali took active part in the agitation for the restoration of the mosque and, towards the end of 1913, headed a deputation consisting of himself and (Sir) Syed Wazir Hasan, Secretary, All-India Muslim League, to place the Muslim case before the British Government. He also supported inclusion, in the aims and objects of the Muslim League, of efforts for the establishment of "a suitable form of Self-Government for India".

This was the background of events, when the First World War broke out. Turkey had not yet declared her intentions, and speculation was rife about her probable attitude. At this juncture Maulana Muhammad Ali wrote an article on the "Choice of the Turks," in which he gave a long list of wrongs which Turkey had suffered at the hands of the British Government, but advised her to join the allies, in spite of that. The article cost *The Comrade* its security and, in May 1915, Maulana Muhammad Ali and his brother Shaukat Ali were interned under the Defence of India Ordinance.

When "The Ali Brothers" were, at last, released towards the end of December 1919, they found themselves in an entirely new atmosphere. The political barometer touched heights which it had never reached before. There was a tremendous outburst of pent-up feelings, released after years of suppression under censorship and other rigours of war-time administration. The way popular demonstrations were dealt with in the Punjab greatly increased the prevailing tension. To this was added the keen resentment of the Muslims at the treatment which the representatives of the Caliph were getting at the Peace Conference.

Soon a man appeared who could exploit the pregnant situation. M.K.Gandhi who had served a period of political apprenticeship under most trying circumstances in South Africa, and had covered himself with glory, strode on the scene, which he was to dominate for the rest of his life. He at once realised that if the Hindus joined the Muslims in advocating the cause of Turkey, a combination would result which the Government would find irresistible. He was not far wrong—at least for the time being—and soon to his planning and organising skill was added the dynamic personality of Muhammad Ali.

The scenes that followed cannot be easily imagined by those who did not see them. The Hindus and the Muslims literally drank water from one cup. Swami Shardhanand, who till then was bitterly hated by the Muslims for his attempts to convert Muslim Rajputs to Hinduism and who a few years later was assassinated by a Muslim, was most welcome amongst the Musalmans. He was asked to address Muslim gatherings, and actually, on one occasion, addressed the Muslims from the pulpit of the grand mosque of Delhi!

Maulana Muhammad Ali was the principal Khilafat leader and, in 1920, left with a deputation for Europe to represent the views of the Indian Muslims on the future of Turkey. He urged that if the ordinances of Islam were to be carried out properly, the Turkish Caliph must remain in possession of the "Jazirat-ul-Arab," including Iraq, Arabia, Syria and Palestine, with all the holy places situated therein. In making this demand, the Indian Muslims depended, not only upon the *fatwas* of their *ulama*, but on

the statements made by the British ministers in the beginning of the war, declaring that they were not fighting to rob Turkey of her Asiatic territories. Maulana Muhammad Ali pleaded his case eloquently, but the deputation did not achieve anything. Of course, with Mr Lloyd George presiding over the destinies of the British Empire, the failure of the mission was a foregone conclusion, but the Indian Muslim leaders were also not well informed about the state of feelings in Arabia. They were convinced that the Arab revolt against the Turks was due entirely to the treachery of Sharif Husain of Mecca and had no popular support. They forgot that, although the British had exploited the Arab desire for autonomy, yet that desire was there and had a certain historic basis. The Turks were well aware of this, and were not urging the reincorporation of Arabia within Turkey, but the Indian Muslims, relying on a theory of Caliphate and Pan-Islam, demanded this, and got no support, even from the Arabs.

In October 1920, Muhammad Ali returned empty-handed from Europe, and the question was taken up, as to what should be done to redress "the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs". Gandhi suggested a scheme of *Non-Violent Non-Co-operatian*, which included surrender of British titles, boycott of councils, courts and government-aided educational institutions, and resignation from government service. The Khilafat Conference was the first to adopt the scheme, which was later endorsed by the Indian National Congress, and came into force from 1 August 1921.

The success of the scheme was only partial but, considering the rigorous self-denial implicit in its adoption, it cannot be said to have completely failed. A sufficient number of people surrendered titles, resigned from service and committed themselves irretrievably to the nationalist cause, to form a sizable nucleus for struggle against the British Government. Within two months Muhammad Ali confronted Aligarh authorities with a demand that they should sever relations with the government and give up government grant. This, the authorities stated, was not feasible and not even desirable so long as a large number of College students looked to government service for their livelihood after their education. Muhammad Ali failed against the stout opposi-

tion put up by Dr Zia-ud-Din, but was much more successful with the boys. His eloquence completely won them over, and majority of the students left the College to join the National University started by him. This was the birth of the Jamiah Milliyah Islamiyah (National Muslim University) which was later transferred to Delhi, and under the fostering care of Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr Ansari, and Dr Zakir Husain, has become a flourishing institution with its own individuality and usefulness.

The Khilafat movement was largely based on religious sentiments, and had, from the beginning, attracted the *ulama* in large numbers. When the movement of *Non-Co-operation* failed to achieve all the promised results, the *ulama* suggested more drastic and more theological remedies for the ills of the day. One of these—suggested by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad—was the *fatwa* laying down that it was religiously unlawful (*haram*) for Muslims to serve in the police and the army. This view was later adopted in the form of a resolution at Karachi, and its advocacy led to imprisonment of Muhammad Ali for a period of two years. The *fatwa* was widely hailed by the Hindu newspapers of the Punjab, who had always complained of the Muslim preponderance in the police and the army, but it had ao serious results, as very few soldiers and policemen obeyed it.

The other religious prescription for the political ills of the day was the *fatwa* regarding *Hijrat* (migration) from India. It was stated that India had become a *Dar-ul-Harb*, and all true Muslims should leave the country. Afghanistan of Aman Ullah Khan was suggested as the obvious asylum and the ever-enthusiastic Amir also showed goodwill and encouragement. This had rather a pathetic sequence. Many simple, devout Muslims, especially from Sind and the North-West Frontier Province, sold their lands and belongings for a song, and the trek to Kabul began. Nearly 18,000 people gathered in a few weeks at the frontier of Afghanistan, and asked for admission. This alarmed the Amir. He was, presumably, sincere in his original offer of welcome, but never expected that such big hordes would invade his small mountanous kingdom. He declined to receive them and the poor *Muhajireen*, who had followed the *fatwas* of the *ulama*, returned sadder and

wiser people, to dispute the sales which they had effected in such pious haste.

All this time Muslim India was in a frenzy. The attention of the community was wholly concentrated on "the Khilafat," without which, the *ulama* said, the Friday prayers would not be valid. There were almost daily processions and meetings in all big towns and cities of the country, where hysterical speeches were made and people shed tears at what would happen to Islam if there were no Caliph left, except with the clipped powers, allowed by the Peace Conference. The dominant note was one of despair, and there appeared to be nothing left to the pious Muslims, except to lay down their lives for the Caliphate. The most popular song of the period, which found an echo in every Muslim heart, was:

بولی اماں محمد علی کی جان بیٹا خلافت پہ دے دو

[So spoke the mother of Muhammad Ali,
My son, lay down your life for the sake of Khilafat.]

Before long, however, a shining star rose on the dark horizon. Lloyd George had paid no heed to the demands of Muslim India, and had unleashed the Greek armies in Asia Minor. Mustafa Kamal, however, completely upset his plans. He drove the Greeks out of Asia, and faced the jaded allied armies at Chanak with his victorious troops. Britain had, therefore, to decide whether or not she should carry out the policy of Lloyd George to its logical consequences, by actively intervening on behalf of the Greek allies. After negotiations the Conservatives withdrew their support from the Coalition Government, and Lloyd George had to resign. Mustafa Kamal was thus able to consolidate his victories and saved from the wreckage of the Turkish Empire all that was essentially Turkish. He was now the hero of the Muslim India—one bright star, which had dispelled darkness. Illustrative of the enthusiasm, which now surrounded his name is a Punjabi song, which was very popular at this time:

غازی مصطفیٰ پاشا کمال وے تیریاں دور بلائیں
دیویں هندیاں نوں آن جمال وے کاهنوں دیریاں نیں لایاں

[O Ghazi Mustafa Kamal Pasha!
May all your troubles disappear!

Come and show your face to us, Indians,
Why are you keeping us waiting so long ?]

All this time the Indian Muslims were completely oblivious of their own problems. They had been taught, since 1912, that Pan-Islam was not only their sole hope but a religious duty—and nothing else mattered. It is true that a few of the far-sighted leaders (who, however, had little popular support at the time) continued to watch their interests, but for the masses that meant nothing. They were concerned only with the great religious institution of Khilafat, and the fact that Mustafa Kamal had restored Turkey to a position of importance foreshadowed for them the revival of the grandeur of the Caliphate!

They were, however, in for a rude shock. Their leaders, while rousing them to every possible sacrifice for Turkey and Caliphate had kept them—probably they themselves were—blissfully ignorant of what was passing within Turkey. Mustafa Kamal's efforts were not for the revival of the Caliphate, but for the regeneration of Turkey. Himself a stern, realistic, unreligious soldier, he had no use for the show of an institution which might have kept the pious Muslims in India on tenter-hooks, but which in the Great War brought no material advantage to his country. Far from restoring the glories of the Caliphate, he abolished it and expelled the Caliph from Turkey!

This, of course, was a most serious blow to the Khilafat leaders. For a time, they tried to ward it off, by disbelieving the news. "Reuter's lies." "The Usual British Propaganda." Later a more ingenuous theory was offered. "Mustafa Kamal himself aspires to the Caliphate, and so he had to expel the old, effete Caliph, who had hopelessly compromised himself with the Allies." Gradually, however, the grim truth began to prevail over the misty hues of sentimentality, and showed the hitherto popular leaders in a ridiculous light. They had said that the institution of Caliphate was essential to Islam. But here was a Muslim who not only refused to share this view but actually pulled down the hoary edifice!

The abolition of Caliphate had repercussions on the general policy of Muslim India, but to Muhammad Ali it meant not only

a national but a personal blow. Of course, the theory that the Indian Muslims were under any religious obligation to the Turkish Caliph was not his. It had been advocated by Abul Kalam Azad, the apostle of Pan-Islam in modern Muslim India, but Muhammad Ali with his dynamic, picturesque personality, and a real flair for popular appeal, had rapidly ousted him from the leadership of this movement. People looked up to Muhammad Ali as "the Khilafat leader," and with the abolition of Caliphate, his stock fell. But his loss was even greater than this. He lost what had been for years his sipiritual anchor and the chief plank in his political policy.

For the time being, Muhammad Ali tried to hold fast to his vision of Pan-Islam, and at a conference held at Mecca this idealist from India tried to persuade Ibn Saud to surrender his newly won kingdom of Hejaz, and convert it into a model Muslim republic. His efforts failed and, like the other disappointed and disillusioned Indian Muslims, he had to turn his attention to affairs within the country. Here, also, prospects were not very bright. The glorious period of Hindu-Muslim unity had given place to an era of serious communal rioting, and the various Hindu and Muslim leaders, who had agreed so wholeheartedly on "the Punjab and Khilafat" question, differed sharply, when, with the working of the dyarchy, the question of Muslim share in services and legislature assumed practical importance.

Muhammad Ali struggled hard to arrest these disruptive tendencies. He re-started *The Comrade* and the *Hamdard*, and constantly preached, in their columns, the message of Hindu-Muslim unity. He tried to play the role of the peace-maker, by urging the point of view of the Muslims before his Hindu friends, and, on the other hand, urging the Muslims to show faith and confidence in their fellow-countrymen. Soon, he found that his position was untenable and he had to make his choice. His hands were forced, as of his other namesake, on the constitutional issue. He was instrumental, along with Muhammad Ali Jinnah, in drawing up what were known as "Delhi Proposals" for settling the Hindu-Muslim problem. Under these proposals the demands of the Muslims regarding separation of Sind, grant of reforms to North-

West Frontier, etc., were to be conceded by the Congress, and the Muslims were to give up Separate Electorates in favour of Joint Electorates. The proposals had the support of Mr Srinivas Iyengar, the Congress President, and were adopted at the Madras session of the Council of the All-India National Congress. Gandhi, however, did not favour them (as was stated by Maulana Shaukat Ali) and the whole question was referred to a committee, presided over by Pandit Motilal Nehru. The scheme submitted by this committee, known as the Nehru Report, proved a bitter pill, which neither Muhammad Ali Jinnah nor Maulana Muhammad Ali could swallow. They tried to have the scheme modified at the National Convention held at Calcutta in December 1928. They failed, and both came to the bitter conclusion that they could not come to an honourable agreement with the Indian National Congress on the question of Muslim demands.

Both these leaders had so far kept aloof from—in fact, they had actively opposed—the section of the All-India Muslim League, presided over by Sir Muhammad Shafi, which had presented its case before the Simon Commission, and from the beginning had placed no faith in negotiations with the Congress leaders. Developments at Calcutta, however, forced them to join hands with the other Muslim leaders, and on 31 December 1927 and 1 January 1928, both Maulana Muhammad Ali and Sir Muhammad Shafi participated in a representative "All-Parties Muslim Conference" held at Delhi, under the presidentship of H.H. The Aga Khan.

After sixteen years, the course of events had forced Muhammad Ali to the same position in internal politics with which he started, but he was not destined to live very long. His health was completely shattered by now and, on 21 February 1931, he died in London where he had gone to attend the Round Table Conference.

Maulana Muhammad Ali's last years were marred by ill-health, and certain political developments which he must have found most trying. Even the exact value of his concrete contribution to the welfare of his people may be a matter of opinion, but it would be wrong to underrate his importance in our political

history. Nature had endowed him with extraordinary gifts—a dynamic personality, eloquence, sincerity, intense devotion to Islam and inborn capacity for leadership. He infused a new vigour in our political life, and inspired many a noble soul. For almost a score of years he was the idol of the Muslim masses, and till Quaid-i Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah rejuvenated the Muslim League, and fired the imagination of the Muslims by his efforts for the achievement of Pakistan, no Muslim leader evoked so much enthusiasm as his warm-hearted namesake.

Chapter 11

IQBAL
(1877–1938)

THE pen is mightier than the sword. Aligarh had not been totally barren in realising Syed Ahmad Khan's dream of producing Muslim leaders. Hasrat Mohani, Zafar Ali Khan and, above all, Maulana Muhammad Ali headed powerful movements, and dominated the public stage. Having, however, surrendered the intellectual supremacy to Abul Kalam Azad (and his master and collaborator, Shibli), they had to dance to the tunes of the talented editor of *Al-Hilal*. It is true that ultimately this spell broke—or rather, the Pan-Islamic rope, on which they were dancing, gave way—but even then they showed no desire to come down to the steep, pedestrian path marked out by Syed Ahmad Khan. It was again for a man with a steady vision and powerful intellect to brighten their paths and guide their footsteps. It is true that the road, which he showed, was essentially the path shown by the Aligarh leader. Basic national policies seldom die ; desire for self-preservation is as much an instinct with the nations as with the individuals. But the path was lit with a new, bright light, and the footsteps were guided by the magic voice of a poet.

I

Iqbal was born in 1877, at Sialkot, an old historic town on the borders of West Punjab and Kashmir. Like most figures, described in this book, he came from a poor family, but with the help of the scholarships which he won at school and college, he was able to receive very good education. After his preliminary studies at Sialkot, he joined the Government College. Lahore, where he became a favourite pupil of (Sir) Thomas Arnold, who

had left Aligarh and taken service at Lahore. He graduated in 1897, winning a scholarship and two gold medals for proficiency in English and Arabic, and finally took M.A. degree in Philosophy, in 1899.

After the completion of his educational career Iqbal was taken on the staff of the Government College, but his literary career, which was to overshadow all other aspects of his work, had begun much earlier. About this time, Iqbal wrote the first Urdu book on Economics, but even before that, he had started taking part in local poetic symposiums and had early attracted the attention of old masters. In 1901, (Sir) Abdul Qadir started an Urdu magazine—*Makhzan*—which was to provide a literary platform for so many rising writers, and as Iqbal was a friend of the editor, he had to contribute a poem, virtually to every issue of the magazine. The fame of Iqbal had also attracted the attention of the authorities of the Anjuman-i Himayat-i Islam, an influential organisation of Lahore, which aimed, among other things, at the spread of modern education among the Muslims. Iqbal started reading longish poems at the annual gatherings of this Anjuman, and soon established his fame as the rising poet of the Punjab.

Iqbal's pen was busy during these days, and he wrote poems on a wide range of subjects. Iqbal omitted a large number of verses, written in these days, in the final collection of his poems, first published when he was nearly forty-five years old. Perhaps he did not like the immature style of his early verse or, more probably, with his altered views on many subjects, did not care for the sentiments expressed in these poems. From what has been preserved by Iqbal, and from what is available in some valuable "unauthorised" versions of his works, the poetry of this period would seem to fall under three heads. A few of the poems are on subjects connected with Nature, and represent some of the more successful attempts made in Urdu, to imbibe the poetic traditions of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Cowper. In the other set of poems, we see Iqbal as a sufi and an avowed pantheist. In the third series, Iqbal is the champion of the new, rising nationalism of India. One of the longer poems of this period is *Taswir-i Dard*

(Picture of Grief) which was read at a gathering of the Anjuman, held in March 1904, and in which the poet bewails the differences and dissensions in his beloved country. In *Naya Shiwalah* (The New Temple), the poet, equally impatient of the Brahmin and the Mulla, dreams of a New Temple, where love will reign supreme, and where the image of India will be worshipped. There are many poems of this period, expressing similar patriotic, nationalistic sentiments, but perhaps the most famous of them is the *Taranah-i Hindi* (The Indian Anthem), which has been equally popular with all communities in India, and is, in the opinion of many impartial judges, a better expression of true, broadminded Indian nationalism than the "Bande-Matram" of Bankim Chandar Chatterji, which was originally included in *Anand Math*, a novel full of hatred against the Muslims.

II

The first period of Iqbal's poetic career ended in 1905, when he left for higher studies in Europe. He wrote a few beautiful lyrics in his old style when he was studying in England and Germany, but his attitude towards many questions underwent a profound change. Iqbal went to England a nationalist and a pantheist, but returned a pan-Islamist and almost a puritan. The change was partly due to his researches in the history of Islamic mysticism. He wrote a thesis on "Development of Metaphysics in Persia" for his Ph.D. degree and, during the course of his studies, came to the conclusion that *tasawwuf* (or the so-called Islamic mysticism) had no solid, historical foundation in original Islam. He wrote to his friend, Khwajah Hasan Nizami of Delhi, asking him to provide some convincing proof for the theory that *tasawwuf* was an esoteric form of Islam. The answers did not satisfy him, and he gradually came to the conclusion that so far as Islam was concerned, *tasawwuf* was an alien and even an unhealthy growth.

He was also attracted more and more towards Islam as a social and political organisation. Of course, he had never been indifferent towards Islam or Muslims, as his early association with

Anjuman-i Himayat-i Islam would show, but now his attitude crystallised, and took a more tangible shape. He took active part in the meetings of the Islamic Society, which some Indian Muslims had organised in London, and was one of those who were responsible for changing its name to Pan-Islamic Society. He delivered a series of lectures on Islam dealing with such subjects as "Certain Aspects of Islam," "Islamic Tasawwuf," "Influence of Islam on European Civilisation," "Islamic Democracy," and "Islam and Human Intellect". The first poetic indication about his change of attitude came in March 1907, when he wrote a famous *ghazal*:

> The time of unveiling has come, the beloved will be seen by all.
> The secret which was veiled by silence shall now become manifest.
> That time, cup-bearer, has gone when the lovers of wine drank in hiding;
> The whole world will now be a tavern, and all will drink in the open.
> For, the silence of Mecca has proclaimed to the expectant ear at last,
> That the compact made with the desert-dwellers shall be enforced again.
> That lion which emerged out of the wilderness and upset the Empire of Rome,
> I hear from the angels, shall awaken once more.
> O dwellers of Western lands! God's world is not a shop!
> That which you considered good coin shall prove to be counterfeit.
> Your civilisation will kill itself with its own dagger;
> A nest built on a slender bough will not last for ever.[1]

Another important poem reflecting the new attitude was written when Iqbal was returning to India in August 1908. His ship passed near Sicily, which at one time was under the sway of Muslims. The sight of this island, which once belonged to the Muslims, affected the poet so deeply that he wrote a touching elegy, comparable to the poems of Sa'di on the fall of Baghdad, of Dagh on the sack of Delhi (1857) and of Ibn Badrun on the

1. *Bang-i Dara*, p. 149.

fall of Granada :

Weep to thy heart's content, O blood-weeping eye!
Yonder is visible the grave of Muslim culture.
Once this place was the tent of those dwellers of the
desert,
For whose ships the ocean was a playground,
Who raised earthquakes in the courts of mighty
emperors,
In whose sabres lay hidden life-scorching flames,
Whose birth tolled the knell of effete ideals,
With whose fear the strongholds of falsehood trembled,
Whose electric touch revived life in the world,
And broke the chains of superstition.
Tell me of thy anguish ; I too am full of pain. . . .
I am the dust raised by that caravan which once broke
its journey here.
Paint to me that picture of the old,
Rouse me by telling the tale of bygone days ;
I shall carry thy gift to India,
And make others weep as I weep now.[2]

On his return from Europe, the spiritual and ideological changes which Iqbal was undergoing deepened. There is an interesting letter of this period illustrating the process by which Iqbal changed from an Indian nationalist to a champion of Muslim nationhood. In 1909, he was invited to Amritsar to attend a meeting of Minerva Lodge, which was a cosmpolitan organisation with membership open to the Hindus and the Muslims. Iqbal politely declined the invitation and in the course of the correspondence, which ensued, he wrote on 28 March 1909:

"I have myself been of the view that religious differences should disappear from this country, and even now, act on this principle, in my private life. But now I think that the preservation of their separate national entities is desirable for both the Hindus and the Muslims. The vision of a common nationhood for India is a beautiful ideal, and has a poetic appeal, but looking to the present conditions and the unconscious trends of the two communities, appears incapable of fulfilment."[3]

Iqbal had by now come to believe that the Hindus and the

2. Ibid., p. 141.

3. Quoted in Munshi Ghulam Qadir Farrukh, *Safinah-i Hayat*, p. 23. Translated for Urdu.

Muslims were bound to work out their national destinies separately, and his own course of action was clear. He was to use such poetic talent as he possessed to bring Muslims together and to hasten the day when Islam would really fulfil its spiritual and cultural mission in the world. One of the most significant expressions of the poet's new attitude was the "Islamic Anthem," composed about this time. Written in the same metre and rhyme, as the original Indian Anthem, but even more inspired, the poem at once became popular. Another poem of this period which attracted great attention was *Shikwah* (The Complaint) which was recited at the annual session of Anjuman-i Himayat-i Islam in 1911. In it the poet, as the mouthpiece of Muslims, bitterly complains to God that although, of all the people in the world, the Muslims have done most to promote the worship of one God, they are being singled out by Providence for all sorts of misfortunes:

> There are nations besides us: there are sinners amongst them too,
> Humble folk and those intoxicated with pride, slothful, careless and clever,
> Hundreds are there who detest Thy name,
> But Thy Grace descends on their dwellings,
> And nothing but the lightning strikes us![4]

Another important poem was *Shama-o Shair* (The Candle and the Poet) written in March 1912. In it the candle teaches the poet how to carry out his poetic mission of enlightening and inspiring his people, and the poet gives for the first time that message of hope, courage and good cheer which was to become the dominant note of Iqbal's poetry.

In August 1912, *Al-Hilal* appeared and, as has been mentioned already, had a powerful effect on Muslim intelligentsia. Iqbal did not remain unaffected by its message. As a matter of fact, it has been claimed by a colleague of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad that it was *Al-Hilal* which showed Iqbal the new path of Islam.[5] Iqbal, in his letters, has challenged the statement, and anybody

4. *Bang-i Dara*, p. 181.
5. See Introduction to *Tazkirah* of Abul Kalam Azad.

acquainted with the chronology of Iqbal's published works would have no hesitation in endorsing his statement. It cannot, however, be denied that Iqbal, along with other Muslims of India, was affected by the new anti-Westerm *atmosphere* of emotional frenzy created by *Al-Hilal*. The original version of Iqbal's *Jawab-i Shikwah*, written in October 1912, contained verses closely echoing *Al-Hilal's* attitude on the proposed Muslim University and even the Muslim League. At a later date also he wrote about the modern education:

This new wine will weaken the mind still further;
This new light will only intensify the darkness.

The truth is that Iqbal was influenced, not only by Abul Kalam Azad, but by Shibli, Akbar of Allahabad, and even Suleman Nadvi, and to their influence can be traced those elements in his works which Wilfred Cantwell Smith has called "reactionary" in his analysis of the mental make-up of the poet.

Iqbal used to write occasional poems, inspired or suggested by various topics of the day, but before long he undertook a more ambitious task. In 1915 was published the first edition of his long Persian poem—on the "Secrets of the Self"—in which he urged the need of development of self and attacked those poets and sufis who seemed to ignore or oppose it. The book raised a storm of opposition. Iqbal had criticised the celebrated Persian poet, Hafiz, who had many admirers in India. More than that, he had attacked Islamic mysticism as effete and enervating. A fierce controversy ensued, in which some of Iqbal's erstwhile friends like Khwajah Hasan Nizami were ranged against him. Iqbal defended himself with vigour and skill, but he omitted in the next edition those verses on Hafiz which had given offence, and also the long Introduction in which he had urged people to study Western thought—in particular English literature—which was free from morbid, pantheistic influences.

In 1918, Iqbal published *Rumuz-i Bekhudi* (Secrets of Non-Ego) dealing with the development of the national ego. This was a much more inspired book than the first, and as it raised no controversial issues, its popularity was immediate and widespread.

Shortly after the publication of *Rumuz-i Bekhudi* the First

World War came to an end and as a result of the treatment meted out to Turkey at the Peace Conference, Khilafat movement was started in India. For a very brief interval Iqbal was attracted by the movement. He wrote a poem welcoming "Ali Brothers" on their release, and in some small pieces praised Mahatma Gandhi.[6] He, however, soon grew distrustful of the movement, and wrote ironic verses regarding the Khilafat Deputation visiting England "with a begging bowl". The Hijrat Movement finally convinced him that either the popular leaders lacked intelligence or were completely indifferent to the welfare of Indian Muslims. He kept aloof from the Non-Co-operation Movement and resisted the attempts to convert the Islamia College of Lahore into a Gandhian institution.

Since 1907, Iqbal had been giving expression to a vague yearning for Muslim solidarity and brotherhood. That, however, had not involved him in any conflict with his countrymen, and in fact (as could be more clearly seen in Mahatma Gandhi's support to the Khilafat Movement) the Hindu nationalists have been—for temporary political advantages—encouraging a sort of Pan-Islam, which facilitated the formation of a common front against the British. This blissful state of affairs, however, came to an end, when events nearer home began to assume importance. In 1921, a sort of dyarchy was introduced in the provinces, and the Punjab got two able Ministers in Sir Fazl-i Husain, and Lala Harkishan Lal. At that time, the Muslims were in a clear majority in the Punjab, but, apart from their share of agricultural lands which could not be alienated owing to the Land Alienation Act, they were continuously losing ground in the economic, educational and political spheres. Their share in commerce and industry was neligible. The University of the Punjab was almost an exclusively Hindu institution. The political stage was largely dominated by the Hindu lawyer. The public offices and Government institutions had become inaccessible like the caste guilds, in which it was extremely difficult for a Muslim to obtain entry, and even

6. Omitted from *Bang-i Dara*, but may be read in *Kulliyat-i Iqbal* published at Hyderabad.

if he somehow managed to gain admission, he would find that the dice was heavily loaded against him. Sir Fazl-i Husain tried to break this monopoly and secure for Muslims the same share in services which was allowed to them, under the agreed Lucknow Pact, in respect of legislature, and which was nearly 16% less than their proportion of population. His efforts created a flutter amongst the vested interests, which the present generation cannot even imagine. The so-called nationalist paper, *The Tribune*, was then, as ever, wedded to a policy of resolutely (nay, blindly) opposing anything and everything which might benefit the Muslims. Its columns were reserved for years for a condemnation of Sir Fazl-i Husain's policy. The public platform and the provincial council echoed the Hindu resentment at any attempt to make them share their exclusive preserves with any other section of the population.

This agitation opend the eyes of the Punjab Muslims to the problem they had to deal with. Iqbal who was an old classfellow and a friend of Sir Fazl-i Husain saw more of the conflict than an average Muslim did, and was more deeply affected. About the same time events occurred which were to drive a bigger wedge between the Hindus and the Muslims. There were serious communal riots at Multan and other places. Swami Shardhanand started a well-organised and well-financed movement for converting Muslims to Hinduism, and this was naturally resented by the Muslims. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya started his Hindu Sangthan (Hindu Consolidation) Movement which did not flourish, as the educated Hindus saw that the interests of a majority could be even better safeguarded by an organisation (like the Congress) with a "National" label, but the move increased Muslim apprehensions. In the Punjab, the administration of the High Court under Sir Shadi Lal, whose policy seems to have been to keep out every able and self-respecting Muslim, was another running sore. Iqbal who in 1926 had become a member of the Punjab Legislative Council saw closely what was happening, how the Hindus and the Muslims distrusted each other, and were ranged in opposite, hostile camps, kept from a bitter civil war only by the strong hand of the British army.

Iqbal studied the situation and realised that this surely was not leading to the building up of a common nationhood. Many years earlier, he had noticed "the unconscious trends" of the two people, but now his worst fears seemed to be coming true. His views crystallised, and he began to urge that the Hindus and the Indian Muslims were two separate nations, and any future constitutional arrangements must be based on the clear recognition of that fact. The events outside India also helped this tendency. Turkey, which was formerly the hope of the Muslim world, lost her big empire in the Great War. There was no other first-rate or even second-rate Muslim power. So far Indian Muslims had been obsessed by a sense of their inadequacy but now the far-seeing amongst them began to feel that, after all, they may have to become the main hope of the Muslim world. The first to express the feeling of resolute self-confidence was Sir Fazl-i Husain. Supporting him Iqbal said that:

"Indian Muslims, who happen to be a more numerous people than the Muslims of all other Asiatic countries put together, ought to consider themselves the greatest asset of Islam and should sink in their own deeper self like other Muslim nations of Asia, in order to gather up their scattered sources of life and, according to Sir Fazl's advice, stand on their own legs."[7]

The climax of Iqbal's political career came in 1930, when, at the annual session of All-India Muslim League, he set, before the Indian Muslims, the national goal of what later came to be known as Pakistan. In his presidential address, he said:

"I would like to see the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single State. Self-government within the British Empire or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims, at least of North-West India."[8]

III

Iqbal's speech at the League session created a mild flutter amongst the political dovecots, but generally it was not taken

7. "Shamloo," *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, p. 188.
8. Ibid., p. 12.

seriously. Iqbal was invited next year to England to attend the Round Table Conference, and there, while dealing with the future of the Punjab, a scheme of Sir Geoffery Corbet was considered, which would have facilitated the adoption of Iqbal's proposals, but they were, by themselves, never brought before the Conference. Iqbal was, however, able to make some valuable contacts during his stay in England. He had, for one thing, many meetings with Muhammad Ali Jinnah, whom he was able to interest in his scheme for the future of India and who was to make this "poetic dream" a living reality. Another person who met him in England was Chaudhri Rahmat Ali, a Cambridge student, who had been greatly attracted by Iqbal's political proposals. He published pamphlets on the subject, and some outsiders, like Halide Edib, have taken Chaudhri Rahmat Ali to be the author of the Pakistan scheme. The truth, however, is that Iqbal was the first to put it up in a reasonably practical form, and bring it for serious consideration before the biggest political organisation of the Muslims. The fulfilment of the scheme—a far more difficult task—has been the work of Quaid-i Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Chaudhri Rahmat Ali had, however, his own contribution to make.

Lately there has been some controversy regarding the role of Chaudhri Rahmat Ali, and it may be useful to give the version of an outsider. Ram Gopal in his book on Indian Muslims, after quoting extensively from Iqbal's presidential address at Allahabad, goes on to say:

"The League session did not incorporate the presidential suggestion in any resolution, but it stunned Hindus and Sikhs who, in the light of the utterances of some Muslim leaders during the previous two decades, had expressed apprehensions at the Muslims of the north-west of India making common cause with Afghanistan. They now whispered to each other that their apprehensions were not unfounded. The suggestion apparently made no impression on the Muslim delegates in London, but it stirred up the feeling of a body of Muslims who had gathered round the delegates. They requested the Muslim delegation to make the Iqbal speech the basis of the Muslim demand at the Round Table Conference. Having failed to get the attention of the delegates at the Conference, they formed themselves into a committee and

began to propagate the idea."[9]

He amplifies the subject further at pages 269–70 of his book. After quoting at length from the Quaid's speech at the time of the adoption of Lahore Resolution in 1940, he adds:

"The idea which Jinnah and this resolution put forward was not new. It was first mooted by Sir Muhammad Iqbal at the 1930 annual session of the League."

He gives a long quotation from Iqbal's address and continues to say:

"Shortly after this, at the Round Table Conference, a few Muslim students in London had canvassed support among the Muslim delegates to the Conference for a proposal to partition India into a Muslim India and a Hindu India. Leading Muslim delegates dismissed the suggestion as a 'students' scheme,' and took no notice of it during their discussion of the electoral system. But the students doggedly pursued the idea, and two years later, four of them—Chaudhri Rahmat Ali, Mohammad Aslam Khan, Muhammad Sadiq, and Inayatullah Khan—circulated a four-page leaflet from Cambridge in January 1933, at the time of the third Round Table Conference, saying that while Sir Iqbal 'proposed the amalgamation of these [Muslim] provinces into a single state forming a unit of the All-India Federation, we propose that these provinces should have a separate federation, of their own.'. . . These sentiments were presented on behalf of our thirty million Muslim brethren who live in Pakistan, by which we mean the five northern units of India, viz. Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan (Pakistan—land of the pure—was later adopted as the name of the new Muslim state, and spelled as Pakistan)."[10]

In the four-page leaflet entitled *Now or Never*, the expression Pakistan was used, possibly for the first time in print, though Chaudhri Rahmat Ali, Khwajah Abdur Rahim and their co-workers had started using it in oral discussions much earlier.

The writer of these pages was in England from 1931 to 1933 and had frequent opportunities not only to meet Iqbal during his visits to the Round Table Conference but also met Chaudhri Rahmat Ali and in fact worked with him in connection with Iqbal Literary Association. At this time Chaudhri Rahmat Ali's attitude was that

9. Ram Gopal, *Indian Muslims, A Political History, 1855–1947*, p. 231.
10. Ibid., pp. 269–70.

of an admirer of Iqbal, who was greatly impressed with Iqbal's proposal and had enthusiastically taken it up to give it a more concrete shape. A small group photograph of Iqbal with Chaudhri Rahmat Ali, Khwajah Abdur Rahim, Pir Ahsan-ud-Din and three others who were closely interested in the scheme was taken at the time.[11] Chaudhri Rahmat Ali was an enthusiastic member of Iqbal Literary Association which arranged functions in honour of Iqbal, and it was at his insistence that the second reception was presided over by Sir Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana, with whom Rahmat Ali used to stay during his visits to London. All the time Rahmat Ali was an enthusiastic admirer of Iqbal but, as stated by his contemporary and co-worker Mian Abdul Haq, President of Pakistan National Congress organised by the Muslim students at Cambridge, later his attitude changed. In July 1935, Rahmat Ali circulated another four-page leaflet in which he proclaimed himself the founder of Pakistan National Movement. Mian Abdul Haq has described at length the changes in Rahmat Ali's mental make-up, resulting from a study of major Nazi works, of which he knew many passages by heart,[12] his criticism of the Quaid-i Azam[13] and his severe condemnation of the final arrangements for the division of the subcontinent.

Mian Abdul Haq has stated that the name *Pakistan* first occurred to Khwajah Abdur Rahim.[14] Another Cambridge contemporary, Dr Muhammad Jahangir Khan, confirmed this in reply to an oral inquiry by this writer. Even if Chaudhri Rahmat Ali was not the author of the name of Pakistan, there is no doubt that he was the life and soul of the original efforts for popularisation

11. See photograph No. 47 at the end of *Ruzgar-i Faqir*, Vol. II.

12. See *Nawa-i Waqt*, Lahore, 1 July 1964.

13. In fairness to the Quaid-i Azam it may be mentioned that at the request of Khwajah Abdur Rahim and others, he addressed a letter to Chaudhri Rahmat Ali asking for his association in the active struggle for Pakistan, but this help was not forthcoming. After Chaudhri Rahmat Ali's death at Cambridge his debts were paid by the Pakistan Government. His papers are reported to have been destroyed by the Master of Emanual College.

14. *Vide Nawa-i Waqt*, 27 June 1964.

of the demand for Pakistan and that within the means of a Cambridge student, he worked energetically, boldly and enthusiastically for his mission.

Chaudhri Rahmat Ali's name deserves to be remembered with gratitude by all well-wishers of Pakistan. This, however, need not involve any injustice to Iqbal whose contribution, made long before Rahmat Ali appeared on the scene, is a simple matter of printed record. He put forward the scheme in a concrete, tangible form at the principal political platform of Muslim India, gave the proposal the prestige of his illustrious name, and worked for its success. Not only did he put forward the scheme and encourage all who worked for it, but in the course of his stay in England, during informal conversation with the people he met, explained and argued for it. Naturally details of his informal conversations are not on record, but there are enough indications about the lines on which he was working. For example, in a letter addressed to the Quaid he refers to Lord Lothian's remark made to him that his "scheme was the only possible solution of the troubles of India, but it would take 25 years to come".[15] This remark, made before the end of 1932, would show that by then Iqbal had won over a man of Lord Lothian's calibre. Nearer home he had taken more active measures. At Lahore even before his address at Allahabad he got editorials written in the daily *Inqilab* urging that a conference to consider the problems of Muslim majority provinces should be held. For holding this conference a reception committee was organised, with Iqbal as the chairman and Messrs Abdul Majid Malik and Syed Habib as secretaries. This "Upper-India Muslim Conference" was not held—presumably as Iqbal found an opportunity to put forward his scheme at the annual session of the Muslim League—but notice of this Conference appeared repeatedly on the front page of *Inqilab* under the heading "Punjab, Frontier, Sind and Baluchistan are one country".[16]

In the leaflet issued from Cambridge in January 1933, Iqbal's

15. *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah*, p. 21.

16. *Vide* Abdus Salam Khurshid, article in *Mashriq*, Lahore, 1 April 1964.

state is referred to as a "Unit of All-India Confederation". Iqbal's specific scheme quoted above does not wholly justify this description. It is true that elsewhere he said: "What are called residuary powers must be left entirely to self-governing states, the central federal state exercising only those powers which are expressly vested in it by free consent of the federal states." It will be seen that even here Iqbal refers to "self-governing states," but there was provision for these states, vesting by free consent certain powers in the central federal state. This was exactly the position which the All-India Muslim League took before the Cabinet Mission in May 1946.

Iqbal's eminence as a poet has obscured his role as a politician, and a proper study of his work in the national field has not been made. If this is done, it will be found that not only did he put forward a potent idea, which provided the key to the solution of India's constitutional problem, but he took active part in many political activities of the day—e.g. in the Kashmir agitation of 1931. Particularly, in freeing the Punjab from the Unionist hegemony he played a crucial role. When the Quaid's negotiations with Fazl-i Husain broke down, and he had to reorganise the Muslim League in the Punjab in the face of heavy odds, Iqbal was his main pillar of strength. He became the head of the Provincial Muslim League, and in spite of ill-health worked hard. Luckily the Quaid preserved and later published the letters which he received from Iqbal at that time and they throw ample light, not only on Iqbal's activities within the province, but on the moral support which he gave to the Quaid, during the lean years of the Muslim League.

All this time Iqbal had kept up his literary and intellectual pursuits. *Payam-i Mashriq* (Message of the East), easily the most beautiful collection of Iqbal's Persian lyrics, appeared in 1923, the year in which the author was knighted. *Bang-i Dara*, the collection of Urdu poems, followed a year later. Iqbal was now incontestably at the head of the poets and thinkers of Muslim India. Even those who violently differed from his political and social theories read his poetry with delight, and recognised that in him Muslim India had a deep, courageous and original thinker, like whom it had not known anyone since the days of Shaikh Mujaddid of Sirhind and

Shah Wali Ullah of Delhi. When Iqbal visited England at the end of 1931 to attend the Round Table Conference, His Highness The Aga Khan and others gave a reception to meet the Muslim poet. Amongst those who came to join in this homage to Iqbal were Mahatma Gandhi, Lord Reading, Mrs Sarojini Naidu, Dr Nicholson, and a host of other non-Muslim celebrities. Next year, Dr Iqbal visited England again, and once more a reception was arranged in his honour. Amongst those invited to this function, Dr Ansari, the nationalist Muslim leader, was unable to come, but the letter which he wrote from Freiburg may be taken as an indication of the respect which Iqbal's literary and intellectual gifts inspired even in the minds of his political opponents. Dr Ansari wrote to the secretary of the organisation which arranged the function:

"I am much obliged to you for invitation to the reception given to Dr. Mohammad Iqbal, *our greatest national poet and philosopher*. Nothing would have given me greater pleasure than to express my admiration to Dr. Iqbal as a poet and to pay my homage to him. . . ."[17]

Iqbal was, by now, a recognised leader of the Muslims and took active part in the affairs of the day. In this connection what baffled some of his admirers, and resulted in an exchange of letters between him and Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, was the energetic action he advocated against the Qadianis in 1934 and 1935. A certain under-current of resentment against the Qadianis has always existed amongst the Muslims, and can be explained, apart from other things, by the attitude of the Qadianis towards other Muslims. This dormant antipathy flared up, when about this time, a capable Qadiani—Sir Muhammad Zafarullah Khan—and neither Nawab of Chhatari nor Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, was selected to succeed Sir Fazl-i Husain during a short-term vacancy on the Viceroy's Executive Council. The Ahrars, also, had developed some sharp differences with the Qadianis during their agitation against Kashmir Government. It was at this juncture that Iqbal intervened in the controversy. In a statement

17. Letter dated 14 December 1932 to M.A.H. Siddiqi, Secretary, Iqbal Literary Association, London.

on "Qadianis and Orthodox Muslims," which has been now reproduced in the *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, he criticised the policy of non-interference in religion adopted in India by the British and expressed his fervent appreciation of "the orthodox Hindus' demand for protection against religious reforms in the new constitution". As regards the Qadianis, he asked the "Rulers of India" to declare the Qadianis a separate community. This will, he said, correspond with the policy of the Qadianis themselves and "the Indian Muslim will tolerate them just as he tolerates the other religions".[18]

The Qadiani controversy subsided in due course, but Iqbal's energetic advocacy of unreformed orthodoxy, against not only Qadianism, which most Muslims do not consider a religious reform, but against reform in general, caused surprise to not a few. Iqbal was a bold and original thinker. At one time, he was a vigorous champion of all reforms that were necessary to improve the position of the Muslims. But specially after his return from England, he had been subjected to the influence of Shibli, Akbar and Abul Kalam Azad, who were more concerned with the preservation of what they considered to be "Islamic" institutions than with the steps that would improve the existing conditions and ensure the future of the Muslim people. There is no doubt that Iqbal was deeply influenced by Akbar of Allahabad. He wrote poems frankly in imitation of Akbar, and in his address to the Aligarh students, delivered in 1911, paid eloquent homage to that gifted satirist where wit and sarcasm found their main targets in Syed Ahmad Khan and other modernists. In his first letter to Akbar (dated 6 October 1911) Iqbal wrote, "I see you with the same eyes, with which a disciple sees his spiritual guide, and have the same attachment and devotion." He was equally rapturous in his praise of Syed Suleman Nadvi. The influence of these two luminaries could only have been in the direction of comformity with tradition. Syed Suleman Nadvi was, at any rate, a great scholar, and Iqbal drew on the rich store of his knowledge, but now less informed influences were also making

18. "Shamloo," op. cit., p. 98.

themselves felt, Iqbal wrote in a tell-tale letter, addressed to the historian Akbar Shah Khan Najibabadi, on 12 April 1925:

"You are right. The influence of the professional Maulvis had greatly decreased owing to Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's movement, but the Khilafat Committee, for the sake of political *fatwas*, has restored their influence amongst Indian Muslims. This was a very big mistake, [the effect of] which has, probably, not yet been realised by anyone. I have had an experience of this recently. I had written an English essay on *Ijtihad*, which was read in a meeting here[19] and God willing, will be published, but some people called me a *Kafir*. We shall talk at length about this affair, when you come to Lahore. In these days, particularly in India, *one must move with very great circumspection*."[20]

The last sentence is meaningful. Circumspection is good, but where this is enforced by the pressure of those for whom Iqbal had obviously no high regard, it has ominous implications. In some Urdu verses Iqbal had sarcastically referred to those who had to bow their head to the modern conditions and reinterpret the doctrine of *Jihad*. Now he was to realise that the pressure from the other direction could be equally forceful!

Amongst those who were critical of Iqbal's efforts to introduce some measure of flexibility in Islamic Law were not only the obscure "professional *maulvis*" but included even the "*Ustad-ul-Kul* Syed Suleman Nadvi" and Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi. Syed Suleman's comments on some references in Iqbal's letters addressed to him on the subject show from what different angles the two approached the problem. Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi was more forthright. Adding a footnote to Iqbal's

19. Not completely, though. The writer was present at this meeting (anniversary of Anjuman-i Himayat-i Islam, 1924) as a young student, primarily to catch a glimpse of Iqbal—for the first time. The audience wanted a poem, but they were confronted with a discourse of great profundity—and great length. The audience was getting restive. When Iqbal came to a sentence "Life is unending . . ." somebody interrupted by saying loudly, "Like your lecture". Iqbal stopped short in disgust and the audience again started shouting for a poem. Iqbal resisted for quite a while, but ultimately, on the intervention of an elderly gentleman, relented. He recited a short poem, and the meeting ended in a happy atmosphere.

20. *Jang*, Karachi, Iqbal Day Number, 1967. Translated from Urdu.

letter of 23 March 1925, he says, "Iqbal wanted comments on an English essay, 'Ijtihad'. The opinion which was given was *quite hostile*."[21] Iqbal expressed his surprise at Maulana's comments, but promised to keep them in view. Ultimately, the essay on *Ijtihad* was not published but presumably much of it, after modification and curtailment, was incorporated in his lecture on "Principle of Movement in the Structure of Islam" in his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*.

While one is surprised at the warm, almost ecstatic, regard, expressed by Iqbal for Akbar and Suleman Nadvi, there is no denying the fact that he was more fully alive to the needs of the moment. Iqbal was the first to oppose the general tendency amongst Indian Muslims to run down the Kamalist reforms in Turkey. He was amused by the efforts to force hats on people—"the brain remains the same, whether you wear a hat or a turban"—and other attempts to imbibe the superficial rather than the inner causes of Western progress, but in general he watched the Turkish experiment with interest, even with sympathy. In his public controversy with Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, he warmly contested the charge that Turkey had ceased to be an Islamic country, and tried to justify many of the measures which Kamal Ataturk had taken. "In excluding him [the myth-making *mulla*] from the religious life of the people," he said, "the Ataturk has done what would have delighted the heart of an Ibn Taimiyya or a Shah Wali Ullah."[22] In his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, he made sympathetic references to Turkey, and advised the Indian Muslims to keep in close touch with what was passing on in Islamic countries.

Another question on which he had very much of an open mind, in spite of his orthodoxy, was Communism. Of course, Iqbal was firmly opposed to the irreligious tendencies of Russian Communism, but he greatly appreciated the Communist efforts to readjust the existing disparity between various sections of the society. Long before the "Progressive Writers Association" came

21. Sh. Ata Ullah, Ed., *Iqbal Namah* (Letters of Iqbal), I, 238. Translated from Urdu.

22. S.A. Vahid, Ed., *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, p. 283.

into existence, he wrote stirring poems on the present inequalities (like the "*Inqilab, Inqilab, O Inqilab*" of *Zabur-i Ajam*) and was the first among the Indian Muslim writers of note to make appreciative references to the Russian experiment. As a matter of fact, in a letter to Sir Francis Younghusband he went so far as to say:

"Since Bolshevism plus God is almost identical with Islam, I should not be surprised if, in the course of time, either Islam would devour Russia or Russia Islam."[23]

Iqbal was a product of conflicting forces, and advanced Muslim socialists as well as reactionaries of the deepest dye can find verses in his works to support their conflicting ideologies. Basically, however, his was a vigorous mind, untrammelled by convention, and facing forwards rather than backwards. He dearly loved Islamic institutions—even sympathised with Muslim prejudices—but the fundamental fact which some of his so-called admirers forget is that his conception of Islam was "dynamic" rather than "static". Indeed, according to him, it would not be Islam if the truths it enunciated were not "living" enough to be capable of adjustment to varying circumstances. "As a cultural movement," he says, "Islam rejects the old static view of the universe and reaches a dynamic view." Even in the relatively circumscribed field of Islamic Law, he was always seeking what he called "The Principle of Movement" and one has only to study the sixth lecture in his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* to realise what a gulf separated him from ordinary champions and interpreters of *Shariat*.

In this lecture—headed "The Principle of Movement in the Structure of Islam"—he gives a brief account of the conflict in Turkey between the Religious Reform Party led by Said Halim Pasha and the Turkish Nationalists headed by Mustafa Kamal. Iqbal's sympathies are with Said Halim, at one time the Grand Vizier of Turkey, but he is at pains to point out that Said Halim "reaches practically the same conclusion as the Nationalist Party". After giving a summary of Said Halim's views, he says:

"Such are the views of the Grand Vizier of Turkey. You will

23. "Shamloo," op. cit., p. 151.

see that following a line of thought more in tune with the spirit of Islam, he reaches practically the same conclusion as the Nationalist Party, that is to say, the freedom of Ijtihad with a view to rebuild the law of Shari'at in the light of modern thought and experience."[24]

Iqbal would have personally preferred the evolutionary method of Said Halim to revolutionary changes introduced by Mustafa Kamal, but so far as the right of Muslims to reinterpret and readjust their law to altered conditions is concerned, his views were very emphatic:

"Did the founders of our schools ever claim finality for their reasonings and interpretation? Never. The claim of the present generation of Muslim liberals to reinterpret the foundational legal principles, in the light of their own experience and the altered conditions of modern life is, in my opinion, perfectly justified. The teaching of the Quran that life is a process of progressive creation necessitates that each generation, guided but unhampered by the work of its predecessors, should be permitted to solve its own problems."[25]

Towards the end of his life, Iqbal wished to write a separate book on "Reconstruction of Islamic Jurisprudence". Unluckily, death intervened, but the observations which Iqbal has made on this subject in his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* are remarkable alike for their wisdom and originality. Perhaps the most useful of these is his emphasis on "Ijma," and the form it should take under modern conditions. He says, "The third source of Mohammedan Law is Ijma, which is, in my opinion, perhaps the most important legal notion in Islam." According to Iqbal, the proper agency for utilising this recognised source of Islamic Law would be "a Muslim Legislative Assembly". After indicating why the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphs found it more convenient to "leave the power of Ijtihad to individual Mujtahids rather than encourage the formation of a permanent assembly which might become too powerful for them," he adds:

"The growth of republican spirit, and the gradual formation of legislative assemblies in Muslim lands constitutes a great step in advance. The transfer of the power of Ijtihad from individual

24. *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, pp. 156–57.
25. Ibid., p. 168.

representatives of schools to a Muslim legislative assembly which, in view of the growth of opposing sects, is the only possible form Ijma can take in modern times, will secure contributions to legal discussion from laymen who happen to possess a keen insight into affairs. In this way alone we can stir into activity the dormant spirit of life in our legal system, and give it an evolutionary outlook."[26]

Dealing with the question of relationship between the *ulama* and a Muslim legislative assembly, Iqbal refers to the provision in the Persian Constitution of 1906 for a separate ecclesiastical committee of *ulama*—"conversant with the affairs of the world"—to supervise the legislative activity of the Majlis. Iqbal considers this a "dangerous arrangement," and thinks that the proper place of the *ulama* is within the Muslim legislative assembly, where they should help and guide free discussion. After describing the Shiah constitutional theory, which might have been responsible for the peculiar arrangement in Iran, Iqbal says:

"But whatever may be the Persian constitutional theory, the arrangement is not free from danger, and may be tried, if at all, only as a temporary measure in Sunni countries. The Ulema should form a vital part of a Muslim legislative assembly helping and guiding free discussion on questions relating to law. The only effective remedy for the possibilities of erroneous interpretations is to reform the present system of legal education in Mohammedan countries, to extend its sphere, and to combine it with an intelligent study of modern jurisprudence."[27]

Iqbal's last years were darkened by prolonged ill-health. He was also fated to witness some unpleasant developments in the provinces, where the Congress came into power in 1937. Even more depressing was the sight of some young Muslims—and many *ulama*—trying to come to "an unmanly compromise" with the opposite party. Iqbal's faith, however, never faltered. In the words of Jinnah—never given to cheap or undeserved praise—he stood like a rock in the darkest days. He was confident that the Muslims, who had weathered many a storm, would overcome this, and urged that there should be no lowering of the flag. He stood firmly by the Muslim League, and was one of those who

26. Ibid., pp. 173–74.

27. Ibid., pp. 175–76.

criticised the half-hearted allegiance of the Muslim Unionists to the Muslim League, and felt that if the League was to become a party of the masses it would have to fight the Unionist landed aristocracy.

Iqbal did not live to see the realisation of his dream of the Muslim state. He died on 21 April 1938—less than ten years before the establishment of Pakistan—but when the final show-down came in the key province of the Punjab, foremost amongst those who pulled down the Unionist edifice, and paved the way for Pakistan, were those young men—and women—who had drunk deeply at the fountain of Iqbal's poetry. The pen was indeed mightier than the sword.

Chapter 12

THE AGA KHAN
(1877–1957)

A POLITICAL leader, who in solid, fruitful achievements ranks only below Syed Ahmad Khan, the Quaid-i Azam and one or two other leaders, but with whom the present generation is only dimly acquainted was His Highness Sir Sultan Muhammad Shah, more generally known as The Aga Khan. His ill-health made his permanent stay in the subcontinent impossible and his aristocratic temperament was such that he wanted the palm without the dust. He appeared on the scene only at crucial moments and normally remained in the background, but for thirty long years, i.e., from 1904 till 1934, he dominated the national scene and overshadowed other great figures.

The Aga Khan who was the hereditary head of the Ismaili Khojas was born at Karachi on 2 November 1877. When his father died he was only eight, but under the guidance of a wise mother he received liberal education, not only in Arabic and Persian literature and history, but also in English and modern subjects. At first, his active work was confined mainly to the welfare of his followers, but Mohsin-ul-Mulk who used to spend the summer months at Bombay and was able to meet him there soon attracted him to a wider national field. The Aga Khan was Chairman of the Reception Committee for the All-India Muslim Educational Conference which met at Bombay in 1903. He was, next, selected to preside over the important session of All-India Muslim Educational Conference, which met at Delhi in 1904, immediately after the Durbar held by Lord Curzon. The Conference was of special importance, as it was attended by a number of celebrities who had come to attend the Durbar. The Aga Khan read a thoughtful and statesmanlike address, and in particular urged the setting up of a Central Muslim University at Aligarh.

He headed the historic Simla Deputation which successfully presented Muslim demands before Lord Minto on 1 October 1906. After this, The Aga Khan and Mohsin-ul-Mulk corresponded on the need for having a political organisation which could carry on the work of the Deputation, and next year, on the basis of a scheme circulated by Nawab Salim Ullah Khan of Dacca, it was decided to organise the All-India Muslim League. When the first formal session of the League met at Karachi in the last week of December 1907, The Aga Khan was elected its permanent President and continued to hold this office till he resigned in 1913, following the shift in Muslim politics. In 1911, he toured all over the country with Maulana Shaukat Ali on his side as his honorary Political Secretary, to raise funds for the Aligarh University and was able to collect all the money that was required.

The shift in Muslim politics, growing preoccupation of Indian Muslims with the affairs of Turkey and the powerful Khilafat movement brought new leadership to the fore, but The Aga Khan's help was available for all good causes. Essentially a moderate and constructive statesman, he did not share the policy and the programme of the popular Khilafat leadership, but he continued to urge, in his own way. the point of view of Muslim India and render such services to the Turkish cause as were possible. He and Syed Ameer Ali met influential British leaders, explained the Turkish case in the columns of the British press and provided the channels through which financial assistance was sent from India for the relief of Turkish sufferers of Smyrna and other places. They, however, brought upon themselves the wrath of the Turkish Government when Kamal Ataturk abolished the Caliphate. On 24 November 1923, the two leaders addressed the Turkish Government giving the point of view of the Indian Muslims on the steps taken by Turkey. They posted their letter in London, and, according to Syed Ameer Ali's subsequent account, allowed nearly a week to pass before forwarding copies of their communication to the Constantinople press. Nevertheless, owing to some accident of communications, the text reached Constantinople newspapers before it was delivered in Ankara. Three papers published it, and the authorities in Ankara first came to

know of the communication from its publication in the press. As there was considerable opposition to the abolition of Caliphate within Turkey, Ataturk's Government reacted violently to the action of Aga Khan and Ameer Ali. Ismat Pasha Inonu publicly criticised their action and pointed out that they were Shiahs and could not be the spokesmen of the Sunni Muslims of India.

While the mystery of delay in receipt of the communication by the authorities at Ankara was never solved, this unfortunate episode highlights a happy development in the affairs of Muslim India. The Aga Khan and Ameer Ali were both Shiahs but in modern Muslim India the sectarian differences had ceased to count in political matters. The situation had changed completely from the eighteenth century when Shiah-Sunni differences had all but destroyed Muslim solidarity. The climax was to come during the Pakistan movement, when Muhammad Ali Jinnah, himself a Shiah, worked hard to bring into existence a state in which Sunni Muslims were bound to be in an overwhelming majority.

The Aga Khan and Ameer Ali had received a sharp rebuff from the Turkish authorities, but they did not allow this to interfere with their efforts in the cause of Turkey. In particular, The Aga Khan seems to have played an importaat role at a crucial moment. Turkish troubles were largely due to the policy of the British Premier Lloyd George who headed the Coalition Government of Liberals and Conservatives. But for his exit from the office following the break-up of the Coalition, it is certain that Britain would have intervened in favour of Greeks to whose support Lloyd George was personally committed and Ataturk would not have been able to consolidate his gains. Authoritative evidence is available to show that The Aga Khan personally contributed to the exit of Lloyd George. Beaverbrook, the influential press lord of Great Britain, has given details of events preceding the withdrawal of Conservative support to Lloyd George's government. In his *Politicians and the Press*, he refers to his visit to Deauville in August 1922 and adds:

"At the Royal Hotel there, His Highness Prince Aga Khan discussed with me the disastrous character of the relations of the British Government with the *de facto* Turkish Government. I

decided to go to Angora and discover what the real intentions and terms of the new Turkish Government were. I had made arrangements, through the medium of Prince Aga Khan, for a meeting with Mustafa Kamal."[1]

Lord Beaverbrook proceeded to Constantinople after discussing matters with the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill and Lord Birkenhead, and on his return "tried the power of private persuasion in the interests of Anglo-Turkish peace". He had long interviews with Lloyd George, Lord Birkenhead[2] and Winston Churchill—the triumverate which dominated the counsels of the Coalition Ministry. He urged that:

"they should at all costs abate the rigour of their anti-Turkish attitudes and that they would not find it difficult to come to an honourable arrangement with the Turkish Government."[3]

When three or four days' discussion proved unavailing, Beaverbrook "went to Bonor Law in his retirement and said to him, 'These men mean war.' As it turned out, this sentence epitomising a situation was the signal for the overthrow of the Coalition Government."[4] Bonor Law wrote to the press declaring that Britain could not act as "the policeman of the world alone" and criticised the policy which the Coalition Government was following. His letter was the "death-knell of the Coalition Ministry" and the famous party meeting of the Conservatives which was held at the Carlton Club on 19 October 1922 decided to withdraw support from Lloyd George's government, and the Coalition collapsed. Next month, the Conservatives came to power under Bonor Law and a new policy was adopted under which agreement with the new Turkish leaders became possible.

Another distinguished journalist gives yet another instance of the manner in which The Aga Khan used his contacts in high

1. Beaverbrook, *Politicians and the Press*, p. 48.

2. The biographer of Lloyd George records that Birkenhead explained to Beaverbrook that in the matter of Chanak, the British Government were fighting the "battle of Christianity" (*vide* Frank Owen, *Tempestuous Journey—Life and Times of Lloyd George*, p. 653).

3. Beaverbrook, op. cit., p. 49.

4. Ibid.

places to further Turkey's interests. Those who are acquainted with the developments during the viceroyalty of Lord Reading will recall the occasion when the Government of India urged the British Government to revise the Treaty of Sevres on lines favourable to Turkey. During the last days of February 1922, Lord Reading's government sent an important despatch to London, urging "that the allies should evacuate Constantinople, giving back to the Sultan his former suzerainty over the Holy Places, and also restore Thrace and Smyrna to Turkey".[5] The Government of India asked for permission to publish this despatch. The permission was granted by Edwin Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, and the telegram was duly published. Curzon, the Foreign Secretary, strongly objected to this and, under Lloyd George's insistence, Montagu had to resign from the British Cabinet and go into political wilderness. Sir Stanley Reed, the influential editor of *The Times of India*, has thrown light on the origin of this famous despatch. In his memoirs, he writes:

"What was the origin of that despatch? In a sense it was due to the inspiration of His Highness the Aga Khan. In one of our many talks on the political situation in India, generally at breakfast in the Aga's pleasant bungalow in Bombay, facing the westering sea, he stressed the importance of action which would allay the just resentment of seventy millions of Moslems in India at the draft treaty with the Turks."[6]

Reed discussed the question with Reading and Lloyd, the Governor of Bombay, and the despatch of which the original draft was prepared by Lord Lloyd, and which was endorsed by Government of India, was sent to London.

During the Khilafat movement The Aga Khan was not in the centre of the picture but when, following the abolition of Khilafat by Turkey, the movement collapsed and Indian Muslims had to pay more attention to less romantic but ultimately more rewarding situation nearer home, they again turned to him. In 1927 the All-India Muslim League had split into two sections—one headed by Sir Muhammad Shafi and the other by Muhammad

5. Frank Owen, op. cit., pp. 603–04.
6. S. Read, *The India I Knew—1897-1947*, pp. 187–89.

Ali Jinnah—on the question of co-operation with the Simon Commission. There were numerous other bodies like the Khilafat Conference and Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i Hind claiming to speak on behalf of Indian Muslims. Muslim India was so sadly divided owing to their allegiance to different parties and organisations that only an All-Parties Muslim Conference could give them cohesion, and so a representative gathering was held at Delhi on the last day of 1928 and the first day of 1929. For this representative gathering nobody more capable of commanding the confidence of different groups than The Aga Khan could be thought of, and he was asked to preside over its deliberations. Recounting the events of 1 January 1929, Coatman says: "That day His Highness the Aga Khan presided over the most representative gathering of Moslems which has ever assembled during the rule of the British in India."[7] The Conference included not only the Muslim League leaders of both the (Shafi and Jinnah) sections but also Khilafat leaders like Maulana Shaukat Ali and representatives of Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i Hind, and it consolidated the Muslim demands.

The Aga Khan's most signal service was, however, during the Round Table Conference of which different sessions were held in London from 12 November 1930 to 24 December 1932. The ostensible object of the Conference was to consider the recommendations of the Simon Commission, but it hammered out proposals which were to form the basis of the next political advance in continuance of Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. At this crucial Conference The Aga Khan was in his own element. Not only was he the leader of the Muslim group, but was also elected leader of the entire Indian Delegation. He played his cards remarkably well, and with his suavity of manners and tact, and general attitude of helpfulness kept the Muslim team solidly together, in visible contrast to the many and discordant voices, which spoke from the other camp. He tried to come to an understanding with Mahatma Gandhi on the Hindu-Muslim question, but when these talks proved unfruitful, he initiated a Minorities Pact, by which all sections of the Indian political life, except the

7. J. Coatman, *Years of Destiny, 1926–1932*, p. 233.

caste Hindus and the Sikhs, joined hands with the Muslims. This facilitated the task of the British Premier in giving his Communal Award (16 August 1932) which, notwithstanding its deficiencies, improved the Muslim position in majority areas and was a milestone on the road to Pakistan. As A.K. Majumdar says:

"In 1906, the Aga Khan presented his demands on behalf of the Muslims and Minto accepted; quarter of a century later Aga Khan again presented a demand and the Communal Award was the result."[8]

The activities at the Round Table Conference marked the climax of The Aga Khan's political career. Thereafter, the centre of gravity shifted back to the subcontinent. The Aga Khan's success at the Round Table Conference was not due to any great forensic ability—as a matter of sact, he generally avoided public speeches—but to his great wisdom, personal influence and the large-hearted manner in which he helped all who turned to him. The extraordinary reputation for sagacity which he enjoyed may be judged by the fact that when King Edward the VIII was faced with the great crisis of his life and saw a grim choice staring him in the face over his proposed marriage to Mrs Simpson, he turned for advice to The Aga Khan, as Duchess of Windsor has indicated in her memoirs, entitled *The Heart Has Its Reasons.*[9] Of course, this issue was one in which even The Aga Khan could not help but the mere fact of the British sovereign turning to him for advice gives an indication of the reputation and the influence he enjoyed in the highest British circles.

During the last decade of the British rule, a grim struggle started, in which The Aga Khan sitting thousands of miles away and with essentially a moderate and cosmopolitan outlook, was not well equipped to help. He, however, continued his interest in the affairs of the Muslims of the subcontinent and his Diamond Jubilee was celebrated in Pakistan. On this occasion, as always, he spoke with mature wisdom and good sense, but perhaps the

8. A.K. Majumdar, *Advent of Independence*, p. 128.

9. The Duchess of Windsor says about "this sagacious and experienced leader": "The Aga had been a close and admired friend of George V, who often consulted him privately on political matters" (p. 262, note).

most important speech of his latter years was made on 8 February 1950, before the members of Pakistan Institute of International Affairs at Karachi. He was making his remarks before the ideological controversy became pronounced in Pakistan. In any case, with his brief occasional visits to the new state, he could not be expected to be very intimately acquainted with the conditions here, but he rightly placed his finger on what is the most crucial problem of the modern Muslim world. Speaking on "The Future of Muslim States," he said:

"And finally, the fact must be faced that there is either an open or hidden clash between the conservative and the progressive elements in Muslim society. In Turkey this clash has led to a secular state. In Egypt it is there between the Ikhwan and the governing classes. It threatens itself in the opposition between the so-called Darul-Islam and the responsible government in Indonesia. Thank God, it is not so in Pakistan. But unless a healthy middle way such as existed in the first century is found, the ship may be on the rocks again. Pious Muslim thinkers who face realities in Egypt, North Africa and Iran know about it. I hope and pray that it may be the destiny of Pakistan whose creator Quaid-i-Azam was essentially a modern man, to bring about this spiritual and intellectual unity. Here and now, and by not only its example but its mediation and influence, [may it] prevent ever again from leading to final break as it did in Turkey, in any other Muslim state and society." [10]

The Aga Khan passed away on 11 July 1957, and, in accordance with his wishes, this citizen of the world was buried in Egypt. According to his will, his son Prince Ali Khan was passed over at the time of succession, and his grandson, who had been educated at Harvard University, succeeded him. He is walking in the footsteps of his illustrious grandfather and taking keen interest in the welfare of the Muslim world. One of the early indications of this interest is his endowment of the Chair of Islamic Studies at Beyrut, to which distinguished scholars from different Muslim countries are, in turn, appointed as Visiting Professors.

10. Sultan Nazerali, Ed., *Message of H.R.H. Prince Aga Khan to the Nation of Pakistan and World of Islam*, p. 11.

Chapter 13

EMERGENCE OF THE MUSLIM MAJORITY PROVINCES

IT has been said, with considerable justice, that the Muslims from the provinces where they were in a minority took the lead in the struggle which ended in the establishment of Pakistan. This was particularly true of the response to the call of Muslim League in the elections of 1936, which marked the beginning of the final phase of the struggle. It is also true of the basic struggle of the Indian Muslims for securing an honourable place in the Indian subcontinent. When this struggle started, sometime after the Revolt of 1857, Muslims in the minority areas—particularly in U.P., Bihar and at Delhi, the old Muslim capital—were ahead of Muslims in other areas, and they took up the cause of the community, irrespective of what would be the ultimate consequences of the struggle. With the introduction of the representative institutions in the early part of the twentieth century, a situation arose in which the interests of Muslims in majority areas (where they stood to gain by the fullest extension of the representative principle on the basis of population) seemed to come in conflict with the requirements of the Muslims in the minority areas. The Muslim leaders tried—as at the time of the Lucknow Pact—to reconcile these conflicting claims, but basically it is true that the lead in the community's revival was taken by the provinces where the Muslims were in a minority. This, however, does not mean that Pakistan could have come into being without the Muslims in the majority provinces playing their proper role or that even the goal of an autonomous Muslim state formed by amalgamation of Muslim majority areas could have been decided upon without Muslims becoming politically dominant in the areas in which they were in a majority.

Pakistan came into being, under the Mountbatten Plan of

3 June 1947 on the basis of territorial self-determination. In order to know the process which paved the way for Pakistan by consolidation of the Muslim position in the provinces whose votes were ultimately decisive, as also to understand the background of the areas which now constitute Pakistan, it is relevant to deal somewhat fully with the developments in these areas.

This study is of interest for another reason. The growing importance of the Muslim majority provinces was also accompanied by a marked shift in the community's political objectives. As Professor I.H. Qureshi remarks:

"The earlier leadership had come from the areas where the Muslims were in a minority. They did not find it easy to break away from the notion of being a minority even though they had felt that the term did not quite fit them. When the Muslim majority areas also began to contribute to the leadership of the community, a change was bound to take place." [1]

Hitherto Muslim emphasis had been on "Safeguards for Minorities". This basic plea remained unaltered, as Muslims continued to be a minority on an all-India basis and in most of the provinces, but now a new rider was added. In 1924, the demand for an effective representation of the minorities was made "subject to the essential and overriding proviso that no majority shall be reduced to a minority or even an equality". It was not a mere coincidence that this far-reaching modification of the political goal was sponsored by Muslim leaders from an area with a precarious Muslim majority. [2]

Dr Qureshi mentions Chaudhari Rahmat Ali's approach as characteristic of the notions which were introduced "when the Muslim majority areas began to contribute to the leadership of the community". As stated above, this characteristic contribution had begun much earlier—in 1924—and this shift of emphasis had to be urged continuously and in the teeth of opposition of non-Muslims as well as the Nationalist Muslims.

Some early spokesmen of the Muslim majority areas—Mian

1. I.H. Qureshi, *The Struggle for Pakistan*, p. 16.

2. See Syed Nur Ahmad, "Lahore Resolutions, 1924 and 1940," *The Pakistan Times*, Lahore, 23 March 1967.

Fazl-i Husain, Iqbal, Chaudhari Rahmat Ali—came from the Punjab, but, curiously, it was this province which lagged behind all others in the last and the decisive round. Till less than six months before the inauguration of Pakistan, the Punjab was ruled by a Coalition Government which did not include any representative of the Muslim League and which was opposed to the creation of Pakistan !

In the final stages, the new province of Sind took the lead amongst the Muslim majority areas. The Sind Provincial Muslim League Conference passed a resolution on 10 October 1938 urging the right of "political self-determination for the two nations known as Hindus and Muslims". The Sind Assembly passed a resolution in support of Pakistan in March 1943, and Sind was the first province to decide in favour of Pakistan under the Plan of 3 June 1947.

Sind made its contribution, but even more valuable support to the League leadership came from the major province of Bengal. The expansion of the original concept of Pakistan beyond the north-western bloc was due to the leaders from Bengal, and the Muslim League could never have enjoyed half the influence it carried in the political sphere without the powerful support of the Muslim League coalition government of Bengal. It is not without significance that Lahore Resolution as well as the resolution of the Muslim Legislators' Convention in 1946—which really deserves to be called the Pakistan Resolution—was moved by Chief Ministers of Bengal, A.K. Fazl-ul-Haq and Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy, respectively.

THE PUNJAB

The first majority province in which Muslims were able to make themselves heard was the Punjab. The reasons for this were simple. Till the Census of 1921 revealed another rapid increase in the Muslim population of Bengal, the Punjab had the largest percentage of Muslims, viz. 54·8% against 52·8% of Bengal according to the Census of 1911. Besides, the Muslims in the Punjab had not been subjected to the same systematic grinding

which had been the fate of the Bengali Muslims since the battle of Plassey. The Muslims, here, still counted in the life of the province. Although no seats were reserved for the Punjab Muslims under Minto-Morley Reforms, they were able to secure 25% seats, while Muslim share of elected seats in Bengal was only 10·4%. The position of both provinces improved under the Lucknow Pact, but Muslims in the Punjab got 50% of the elected seats, while in Bengal, their share was only 40%.

Punjab under the British. When the British conquered the Punjab from the Sikhs in 1848, it also included the districts which were later formed into the North-West Frontier Province and from 1858 to 1911 included Delhi. The Sikh rule was marked by anarchy and maladministration. The Muslims, however, maintained their position in the educational sphere,[3] as the Sikhs retained Persian as the court language. The British rule in the Punjab was also marked by autocracy of the "non-regulated" provinces, which was bemoaned by Ghalib and Syed Ahmad Khan. In fact, Hali says[4] that Syed Ahmad Khan gave up his residence in Delhi and selected Aligarh for his life-work, because he did not wish to be under the "despotic" sway of the Punjab Government. He made this clear to Sir Donald McLeod, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, in 1866, and expressed the same sentiments in 1869 to Fitzpatrick, who had been Deputy Commissioner of Delhi, and later became Lieutenant-Governor of

3. This seems to have been a source of some anxiety to the early British administrators. Captain Fuller, the Director of Public Instruction, wrote in the Education Report for 1860–61 : "The preponderance of Muslims among teachers, who are being trained in these institutions, is very apparent, there being 434 of them to 111 of the Hindus and 6 of other castes. There seems no way of equalising the proportion very readily. Except in the Ambala circle, vernacular education is in the hands of the Muslims, and we cannot supersede them, so long as they retain their popularity. District officers, however, might prepare the way for a gradual change by encouraging more Hindus to qualify as teachers, and appointing them to schools where residents are not too strongly prejudiced in favour of Muslim instructors" (quoted by Ram Gopal, *Indian Muslims, A Political History, 1858–1947*, pp. 42–48).

4. Altaf Husain Hali, *Hayat-i Jawaid*, pp. 445–46.

the Punjab.

The autocracy of the individual officials or Europeans only reflected the government policy followed in administrative and constitutional matters. The way in which the Punjab had been kept behind other provinces in constitutional matters has been ably summed up by the biographer of Mian Fazl-i Husain:

"The Indian Councils Act, 1861, established Legislative Councils in Bombay and Madras, and authorized the establishment of similar councils in other provinces. In Bengal and the United Provinces Councils were constituted in 1863 and 1866, respectively, but in the Punjab a similar Council did not come into existence till 1817, thirty-six years after the Act which authorized its creation. The Indian Councils Act of 1892 authorized an increase in the membership of the Councils, and allowed reserved seats to be filled by indirect election from public associations and municipal and other bodies. Although every other province in India took advantage of these provisions, none of them were ever extended to the Punjab, where the strength of the Council, established in 1897, was fixed at nine, all of whom were nominated by the Lt.-Governor. The Morley-Minto Reforms maintained the traditional discrimination against the Punjab. The Punjab like Assam was allowed only thirty members in spite of the fact that population of the Punjab was twenty millions while that of Assam was only seven millions. Similarly, while the proportion of elected members to the total strength was 53% in Bengal, 48% in Bombay, Madras and Eastern Bengal, 42% in U.P., the Punjab had only 19% elected members." [5]

Something of this autocracy continued till the end of the British rule, but the province gained under its new rulers, who established the rule of law and brought vast new areas under cultivation, through large-scale canal irrigation. The Victorian policy of the *laissez-faire* and the introduction of a new civil law in an area where different practices prevailed, resulted, however, in certain economic difficulties for the rural classes, whose agricultural lands, hitherto immune from attachment and sale, began to be sold under the strict British Law to the money-lenders. The previous position and the new changes have been ably summed up by an Indian scholar, in the following words:

"The Punjab peasant did not have any proprietary rights in

5. Azim Hussain, *Fazl-i Hussain, A Political Biography*, p. 75.

land in the pre-British period. The community had been collectively the proprietary unit. It was difficult, therefore, to alienate land from the cultivator without the consent of the whole community. The terms like 'individual rights,' 'property,' the 'purchasing power of money,' 'attachment and sale' were beyond the comprehension of the cultivator.[6] Since there was no legal sanction behind the debts taken or to enable the money-lender to hold land, the cultivator could pay back to his creditor whenever he had surplus. There were no middlemen. The 'Bania' was quite ineffective due to the existence of (1) a vigorous village community, and (2) the apathy of the state towards recovery.[7] The money-lender depended more on his personal influence than that of 'Kardar' (the local executive authority) for the recovery of his debt. But after annexation 'a bond of debt secured on the mortgage or conditional sale of land became a sacred instrument, to be construed according to its terms.'[8] With the establishment of the Civil Law and the decline of the village community, the money-lender began to reign supreme in the village."[9]

Much damage was done, before some conscientious British administrators, amongst whom Thorburn, the author of *The Mussalmans and the Moneylenders*, was most prominent, realised the danger and in 1900 the Government enacted the Land Alienation Act, banning transfer of agricultural lands to non-agriculturists.

Muslim Organisations

The Muslims of the Punjab, also, benefited greatly from the Aligarh movement. They responded enthusiastically to the call of Syed Ahmad Khan and among his close collaborators were men like Sardar Muhammad Hayat Khan (father of Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan), Khan Bahadur Barkat Ali, and Khalifah Muhammad Hasan, Chief Minister of Patiala. They not only supported the activities at Aligarh but also tried to organise Muslims in the Punjab.

6. S.S. Thorburn, *The Mussalmans and the Moneylenders in the Punjab*, p. 49.
7. Darling, n. 1, 170.
8. Thorburn, op. cit., pp. 49–50.
9. Satya M. Rai, *Partition of the Punjab*, p. 75.

Anjuman-i Islamiyah

The first organisation established during the British period (in 1869) to look after the Muslim interests in the Punjab was Anjuman-i Islamiyah.[10] It was originally set up to take over and maintain the Badshahi Mosque which had been converted, during the Sikh rule, into a magazine for storage of gunpowder, etc., but was now being restored to the Muslims by the British. Gradually the Anjuman extended the field of its activities which came to include all efforts "to improve the social and intellectual conditions of the Muhammadans of the Punjab and to further Muhammadan interests generally". In addition to the Badshahi Mosque which was repaired at a cost of a lakh of rupees, the restoration of the shops attached to the Golden Mosque, Lahore, and the custody of the holy relics of the Holy Prophet formerly kept in the Fort, it also established scholarships for Muslim students. In 1888, it made arrangements for holding the session of the Mohammadan Educational Conference at Lahore, and continued to look after the Badshahi Mosque during the British period.

Khan Barkat Ali Khan

A number of prominent people and *raises* were connected with the Anjuman, but the driving force was provided by Khan Bahadur Muhammad Barkat Ali Khan about whom (Justice) Shah Din wrote in April 1888 : "Khan Bahadur Muhammad Barkat Ali Khan is the guiding genius of the Anjuman-i-Islamia. It is he who, like a beneficent taskmaster, is driving the *raises* of Lahore, the slaves of indolence and luxury, on to their work."[11] Barkat Ali Khan belonged to a Pathan family of Shahjahanpur and was born in 1821. In 1847 he was appointed Thanedar of Mukerian (Hoshiarpur district) and rendered noteworthy services to the British during the Sikh War of 1848. Two years later, he became a Risaldar in the military police and, in 1860, was, at his own request,

10. The Anjuman is designated as the *Sadr Anjuman-i Musalmanan-i Punjab* in the account of Syed Ahmad's visit to the Punjab in 1873 (*Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq*, IV, 182).

11. Bashir Ahmad, *Justice Shah Din—His Life and Writings*, p. 252.

appointed Tehsildar. In 1864, he was appointed Tehsildar at Lahore which was to be the scene of his activities for the next forty years. In 1868, while he was yet a Tehsildar, he was made a Khan Bahadur—an honour rarely granted at that stage of service. In 1870, he was promoted as Extra-Assistant Commissioner, Lahore, and worked in this capacity till his retirement in 1882. He was known for his administrative and diplomatic ability. "In 1873, he received the commendations of the Government for settling certain religious disputes in Lahore" and used to be placed on special duty to look after prominent foreign visitors to the provincial capital, e.g. the Envoy of Shah of Bukhara whom he escorted to Calcutta and back in 1872. After his retirement he settled down in Lahore and devoted himself to public work, in which he had maintained active interest even during government service. His main field of activity was the Anjuman-i Islamiyah, but he was also Vice-President of the Lahore branch of the Indian Association, of which Sardar Dayal Singh—the founder of the Dayal Singh College, Dayal Singh Library, *The Tribune*, etc.—was the President, and which at an early stage included some prominent Muslims. Possibly, the enthusiastic reception which Syed Ahmad had from non-Muslims at Lahore—Sardar Dayal Singh Majithia was present at the railway station to receive him in 1873 as well as in 1884 and made a handsome donation for the Aligarh College, while the Indian Association presented him with an address of welcome—was due to Khan Bahadur Barkat Ali's influence with the non-Muslims and his position in the Indian Association. He was also associated with many other public bodies, e.g. the University of the Punjab and the Lahore Municipality.

Khan Barkat Ali Khan shares with Sardar Muhammad Hayat Khan the distinction of being one of the two chief helpers[12] of Syed Ahmad Khan in the Punjab. At first, he moved a resolution in the *Shiksha Sabha* in support of the proposed Aligarh College. Later, he and Sardar Muhammad Hayat invited

12. There was another—Khalifah Muhammad Hasan—but he was in an Indian state (Patiala).

Syed Ahmad Khan to visit the Punjab, and Syed came with a big party in the last week of December 1873, i.e. even before the establishment of Aligarh Collegiate School. At that time both Sardar Muhammad Hayat and Khan Barkat Ali Khan were posted at Lahore, and both worked hard to make the visit a memorable occasion. At the time of Syed Ahmad's second visit—in 1884—Sardar Muhammad Hayat was stationed at Gurdaspur. So the arrangements at Lahore were entirely the responsibility of Khan Barkat Ali Khan, and they left nothing to be desired. In 1888, the third annual session of All-India Mohammadan Educational Conference was held at Lahore. It was presided over by Sardar Muhammad Hayat, but all arrangements for holding the session and looking after the guests were made by Barkat Ali Khan. His interest in the Educational Conference was lifelong. In 1895, he was instrumental in inviting the Conference to hold its annual session at Shahjahanpur, his home town, and arrangements were again praiseworthy. The annual reports of the Conference bear ample testimony to his position in the Aligarh movement and the constant support which he gave to Syed Ahmad Khan. In 1900, while old and ailing, he made a spirited speech in answer to a criticism of Syed Ahmad by a co-worker of Leitner at the annual session of the Conference. His services to the Aligarh College were recognised by naming of a Lecture Room after him, with a tablet summarising his services.

Khan Barkat Ali Khan lived to a long life and, in February 1902, the Lieutenant-Governor referred to him as "the Patriarch of the Lahore Muhammadans". Now he began to shed his various offices. Lahore Municipality involved more regular work and he resigned from that body in November 1902. He resigned from the Punjab branch of Lady Dufferin Fund in May 1904 "by reason of advancing years". His interest in the Muslim Anjumans was, however, maintained. He continued his links with the Anjuman-i Islamiyah till his death, and, on 21 April 1905, he presided over the opening session of the annual meeting of the Anjuman-i Himayat-i Islam. Less than four months later, he passed away, full of honours and years on 2 August 1905. His services were valued so much by the Muslim public of Lahore that Barkat Ali

Muhammadan Hall, which became the venue of important Muslim meetings and the headquarters of Anjuman-i Islamiyah, etc., was named after him.

Khan Barkat Ali Khan had varied interests. In 1849, the Deputy Commissioner, Hoshiarpur, had described him as "a fair scholar," but what brought him the Fellowship of the University of the Punjab in those early days was not his scholarship, but the steps which he took for "promoting the interests of [Dr Leitner's] Anjuman and those of the Punjab University College". From a communication dated 24 October 1868 it appears that while Dr Leitner was away in Simla, Barkat Ali Khan, on his own, collected funds and paid off the arrears due to the teachers (of the University College) whose services had been dispensed with, apparently for want of funds. He also made arrangements for future subscriptions to ensure their re-employment. Three years earlier, he had been instrumental in the establishment of what was probably the first Girls School at Lahore. A *Parwanah* dated 5 January 1865, accompanying the grant of a *Khila'at* from the Lieutenant-Governor, commended his "great efforts in the establishment and improvement of the Girls' School at Lahore (having donated sums of money and acted as chief promoter of the cause within the limits of his own jurisdiction)". Khan Barkat Ali Khan was Tehsildar of Lahore at that time and some of his actions could be attributed to the zeal of a dutiful officer—and in the years prior to and succeeding the great Revolt of 1857, this aspect of his work was emphasised by him—but even so he set a shining example for government officials. He was one of the earliest to respond to the call of Syed Ahmad Khan and the annual reports of the Mohammadan Educational Conference bear testimony to his position in the Aligarh movement. In some of these reports his name appears at the third or the fourth place in the Aligarh hierarchy—at times even before Mohsin-ul-Mulk—but he lacked the literary and oratorical skill of the better-known leaders of the movement. As he resided away from Aligarh, his opportunities of making a contribution to the national cause were limited, but he occupied a prominent place in the history of the Muslim Punjab in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Anjuman-i Himayat-i Islam (Estd. 1884)

The organisation which not only surpassed Anjuman-i Islamiyah but successfully brought about a general awakening among the Muslims of the Punjab was Anjuman-i Himayat-i Islam. Anjuman-i Islamiyah was a body of "the upper few," while Anjuman-i Himayat-i Islam "was the natural outgrowth of a spontaneous desire on the part of middle-class Muhammadans of Lahore to co-operate with each other for common good". It represented, as (Justice) Shah Din pointed out in 1888, "a popular rather than an aristocratic or a sectarian movement". The preliminary meeting of the Anjuman-i Himayat-i Islam or rather the *Anjuman*, as it came to be called indicating its greater popularity as compared with the Anjuman-i Islamiyah as well as the more cosmopolitan Anjuman started earlier by Leitner, was held in March 1884. It was formally inaugurated on 22 September 1884 when Khalifah Hameed-ud-Din was elected as its president, his pupil Maulvi Ghulam Ullah Qasuri (then Revenue Minister, Faridkot State) as secretary, Munshi Chiragh Din and Munshi Peer Bakhsh as joint secretaries and Munshi Abdul Rahim as treasurer.

Khalifah Hameed-ud-Din

Khalifah Hameed-ud-Din, who was the central figure in the early days of the Anjuman, was a scion of an old scholarly family of Lahore. His grandfather Maulvi Ghulam Farid[13] (d. 1216/1801–02) was a well-known scholar, but his two sons, Khalifah Ghulam Ullah and Khalifah Ghulam Rasool, excelled him in reputation for scholarship and piety. In 1224/1809, a spacious mosque was built inside Shah Alami Gate by Moran, and Khalifah Ghulam Ullah and Khalifah Ghulam Rasool were selected to teach Islamic subjects in that mosque. The two brothers, particularly Khalifah Ghulam Ullah, were held in great respect by the citizens of Lahore and Khalifah Ghulam Ullah was always given a chair in the *darbar* of the Sikh *raja*. Khalifah Hameed-ud-

13. Muhammad Din Fauq, *Tazkira-tul-Ulama-wal-Mashaikh*, p. 59.

Din who is referred to as the "Chief Kazi of Lahore" by Latif in his *History of Lahore* (p. 279) was the son of Khalifah Ghulam Ullah. In an account of the educational activities of Lahore, which appeared as a supplement to the annual report of the Mohammadan Educational Conference for the year 1887, Khalifah Hameed-ud-Din is mentioned as the Head Teacher in the Government School. He was the father of Khan Bahadur Khalifah Imaduddin (d. 1917) who rose to be a Divisional Inspector of Schools, and grandfather of Dr Khalifah Shujaa-ud-Din who was himself president of Anjuman-i Himayat-i Islam for a number of years and before his death in 1957 was Speaker of the Punjab Legislative Assembly.

Khalifah Hameed-ud-Din and his co-workers did not have many rich patrons. Theirs was an effort of the middle class or really the masses, and in the beginning the main method of raising funds was through placing of earthen pots in Muslim homes so that the householder could add his handful of flour (*Muthi bhar atta*) each day. The organisers were realistic enough to give adequate attention to general education, but the service and support of Islam (*himayat-i Islam*) was the major source of inspiration. The Anjuman prepared its own text-books which contained information regarding various aspects of Islam and were adopted by many Muslim schools in the subcontinent. At that time Christian proselytising efforts posed a great threat—especially during the recurring famines when the missionaries would take charge of the children left orphan or surrendered by starving parents. The Anjuman paid special attention to this problem. It published tracts [14] and arranged lectures for refutation of Christian propaganda and established a well-organised orphanage where Muslim orphans could be looked after.

In course of time, the activities of the Anjuman relating to general education, which were helped by the new generation coming out of Government schools and colleges, grew in im-

14. More solid work in this connection was done by the Muhammadan Tract and Book Depot established in 1882 (in opposition to the better financed Religious Book Society set up by the Christian missionaries ?). It had published twenty books and tracts by 1892.

portance. The small Madrasa-tul-Muslimin which was established in 1886 rose to the position of a High School in 1889 and had more than 700 students on its rolls in 1893 with an annual expenditure of about Rs 10,000. In 1892, the Anjuman laid the foundation of a college by opening a first-year class of eleven students. Its present activities include maintenance of two colleges for boys, one college for girls [before Government take-over of the educational institutions in the country], orphanages for boys and girls and many other beneficent institutions. Of great importance in the history of the province have been its annual sessions, which were addressed by topmost national leaders, and where Iqbal first recited some of his major poems.

Cultural Developments. The Land Alienation Act had ensured that in the Punjab the Muslims, like other agriculturists, would not become landless agricultural labourers, as had happened in Bengal and elsewhere, and, thanks to the efforts of certain enlightened Muslim leaders, the community began to have a certain share of fruits of modern knowledge and orderly government. Owing to the incorporation of Delhi within Punjab after the Revolt of 1857, a number of distinguished scholars—like Muhammad Husain Azad, who lies buried in a corner of Lahore, Altaf Husain Hali and Nazir Ahmad, who spent considerable time in the new province—and many administrators belonging to the old families of the Muslim capital spread themselves in different parts of the Punjab and helped the cause of Muslim regeneration. Foreign educationists—including a Hungarian—also helped. The Education Department was set up in the Punjab in 1856, but for first four years it concentrated largely on elementary education. In 1860, the first institution of higher learning was set up in Lahore; it was a Medical College, where instruction was given in English as well as in Urdu. In that year four students from the Punjab passed the entrance examination of the Calcutta University. The Government College, Lahore, was established in 1864, but for several years students had to be attracted by offer of a scholarship to practically everyone who applied. The educational officers, however, worked with zeal and energy. Even Major Fuller, whose criticism of Muslim pre-

ponderance among teachers has been quoted earlier, was a patron of Azad and worked actively for the promotion of Urdu. In his day the protagonists of Hindi[15] were vocal in the Punjab, but could make no progress. In 1865, at the early age of thirty-eight, Fuller was "swept away by a sudden rush of water on the road between Rawalpindi and Murree" and was succeeded by Captain (afterwards Colonel) Holroyd, whose name is associated with those of Hali and Azad in the rise of the new school of "Natural Poetry" in which Lahore took the lead.

The most picturesque and dynamic personality among the academicians of the day was Dr G.W. Leitner, the first Principal of Government College. He was a Hungarian by birth, received his education in Turkey and after working as an Interpreter in the Crimean War became Professor of Arabic and Muhammadan Law at King's College, London. He was possessed of indefatigable energy and took a very broad view of his responsibilities. He joined his appointment at Lahore towards the end of 1864 and by 21 January 1865[16] he had founded the *Anjuman-i Matalib-i Mufidah-i Punjab* (Society for the Propagation of Useful Knowledge), of which he was the President and with which Azad was prominently associated in early stages.[17] The Anjuman-i Punjab, as the society came to be called, had the following objectives:

(*i*) Revival of ancient Oriental learning;

15. *Vide* summary of Babu Navin Chander's speech at pp. 496–97 of *Khutubat-i Garcin de Tassy* translated and published by Anjuman-i Taraqqi-i Urdu (Auranagbad, 1935). At one time be became Secretary of the Anjuman-i Punjab (*vide Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq*, Vol. VI). Syed Murtaza Husain Fazil, the editor of the latest version of *Makatib-i Azad* published by Majlis-i Taraqqi-i Adab says that "Shiksha Sabha was the cultural society of Lahore before Anjuman-i Punjab was founded in 1864 and Shiksha Sabha gradually ceased to exist" (*Makatib-i Azad*, p. 39). The name Shiksha Sabha will indicate earlier pro-Sanskrit influences. Even after Anjuman-i Punjab came into existence, building where its meetings were held (*Haveli* of Raja Dhayan Singh) continued to be called Shiksha Sabha. The Government College, Lahore, was originally located in this *Haveli*.

16. J.F. Bruce, *A History of the University of the Panjab*, p. 10.

17. He probably helped in editing the Urdu journal of the Anjuman.

(*ii*) Advancement of popular knowledge through the vernacular;
(*iii*) Promotion of industry and commerce;
(*iv*) Discussion of social, literary, scientific and political questions of interest;
(*v*) Association of the learned and influential classes of the province with officers of the Government.[18]

A history of the Anjuman-i Punjab has yet to be written, and a full assessment of its work cannot be made at this stage. There are, however, ample indications of its solid achievements. It "established a Free Public Library and Reading Room, compiled a number of treatises and translations in vernacular and classical languages and established [a shortlived] Oriental School at Lahore during the first year of its existence".[19] It used to arrange regular meetings at which papers in furtherance of its objectives were read and discussions held. It was also publishing a journal, in which these papers were reproduced and other articles printed. Azad's grandson, Agha Muhammad Baqir, has rendered a great service to the cause of history and Urdu literature by compiling from the old volumes of this journal the articles of his grandfather;[20] they bear eloquent testimony to the range of the Anjuman's activities and efforts made by its promoters to spread learning and to educate public opinion on current problems.

The Anjuman-i Punjab became a model for similar organisations at Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Rawalpindi and Qasur, and Sir Donald McLeod, the Governor of the province, gave full encouragement to these societies. Not the least important of the activities of the Anjuman-i Punjab was that it agitated against the Calcutta University, which controlled all the examinations held in the province, and sponsored the scheme for an Oriental University, which was prepared by Dr Leitner in August 1865. This scheme was not immediately approved but Leitner carried on vigorous propaganda and collected funds from local *rajas* and *nawabs*. As a result of these efforts the Punjab University College was set up

18. J.F. Bruce, op. cit. 19. Ibid.
20. Agha Muhammad Baqir, *Maqalat-i Muhammad Husain Azad*, Vol. I.

on 11 January 1870 and was raised to the level of University in 1882, with Leitner as its first Registrar. He continued to be the Principal of Government College. In 1886, he proceeded on leave. "After a lengthy spell of furlough he finally decided to remain in Europe and retired on a pension." His was a dynamic but a controversial personality (he had a violent quarrel with Azad which was later patched up), but his services to the cause of education in the Punjab are memorable and his voluminous *History of the Indigenous Education in the Punjab* (1872) can be even now read with interest.[21] He died on 22 April 1899.

The new literary life and linguistic transformation of the Punjab owed most to Shams-ul-Ulama Muhammad Husain Azad (1830-1910). Not only did that man of genius write masterpieces which are the ornament of Urdu literature, and organise symposiums, which ushered a new era in the history of Urdu poetry, but also prepared new Urdu primers and text-books for infants and adults, which remained current for three-quarters of a century, and laid firm basis for the study and mastery of the Urdu language. Originally from Delhi, he made Lahore his home, and it is due to him more than to any other single individual that Urdu took root in the Punjab and Lahore became the actual heir of Delhi.

With the enthusiastic encouragement of educationalists like Holroyd and Leitner, gifted men like Azad and Hali transformed the literary scene in Lahore. The full crop was to come later, but even in 1868 Garcin de Tassy could say in his priceless series of annual surveys of the cultural scene in India : "In point of intellectual and literary activity Lahore exels other cities of India."[22]

With the emergence of Muslims from newly established colleges, signs of new intellectual life became visible. The founda-

21. After his return to Europe, Leitner set up an Oriental Institute at Woking near London, where he built a mosque for Muslim students. This is now the Shahjahan Mosque, Woking, which is the principal place for Eid prayers in Britain. Leitner was the maternal uncle of Leopold Amery, who was the Secretary of State for India during the fateful years, 1940–45.

22. *Khutubat-i Garcin de Tassy*, p. 678. Retranslated from Urdu.

tion of the Urdu magazine, *Makhzan*, in 1901, by Shaikh (later Sir) Abdul Qadir, whose *New School of Urdu Literature* had appeared three years earlier, gave expression to this new literary and cultural life. The *Makhzan* occupies a unique place in the history of modern Urdu literature. Perhaps never before or after was in Urdu a literary magazine which maintained such excellence over such a long period and appealed to all classes of people. It mirrored the qualities of its editor—sound literary taste, perfect mastery over Urdu, catholicity of outlook and good sense—but its success was also due to the *milieu* which it represented. It came at a time when Urdu prose had become an adequate vehicle of expression and the grip of old conventions which cramped the style of writers had loosened, but literary craftsmanship was still taken seriously. Abdul Qadir lived on to play many prominent roles—as High Court Judge, Education Minister, Member of India Council—but he is primarily remembered as the Editor of *Makhzan*.

Ordinary journalism also had a vigorous start in the new province, and in this too Shaikh Abdul Qadir made his contribution. In 1895, he joined the staff of the *Punjab Observer*, of which he later became the Chief Editor. By now, the *Observer* was of sufficient importance to attract the notice of Syed Ahmad Khan and receive the commendation of the All-India Mohammadan Educational Conference. In the tenth annual session of the Conference held at Shahjahanpur in 1895, Syed Ahmad pointed out the need for a newspaper representing the Muslim point of view in English, praised the manner in which the *Observer* was serving the Muslim cause and moved a vote of thanks to the proprietor. This resolution was supported by Syed Mahmud and was unanimously passed.

The *Observer* was not the first English newspaper owned by a Muslim. Almost forty years earlier Syed Muhammad Azim Dehlavi—the father of Khan Bahadur Syed Muhammad Latif, the author of the histories of Lahore and the Punjab—had brought out the *Punjabee* and another English newspaper from Lahore itself. But those newspapers were probably edited by Englishmen. At any rate, they were meant for British readers and mainly represented the British point of view. The position of the *Observer* was different. It was owned by a public-spirited Muslim, edited by

another, and was intended to represent the Muslim point of view.

Our efforts to trace a copy of the *Observer* have failed. According to the biography of Maulana Habib-ur-Rahman written by his son, the *Observer* was started as a daily newspaper by Khwajah Ahad Shah, a public-spirited shawl-merchant of Ludhiana, which, having been the seat of the British Agent in the cis-Sutlej area prior to the British conquest of the Punjab, was the first centre of Western influences in the land of five rivers. Originally, Khwajah Ahad Shah started the weekly *Philanthropist* in February 1886 from Ludhiana and its success emboldened him to replace it by an English daily. "The first editor of the *Observer* was Shaikh Abdul Qadir and those who contributed to its pages included Mian Miri Shah of Gojra. Mian [Sir] Fazl-i Husain of Batala and Mian [Sir] Muhammad Shafi of Baghbanpura." In 1902 an electric press was imported for printing the *Observer* and its circulation increased considerably. The newspaper followed an independent policy. (Khwajah Ahad Shah became a member of the All-India National Congress in 1888, was elected to Central Legislature in 1910 under Minto-Morley scheme and maintained this position for nine years.) In 1919, the Provincial Government suppressed the newspaper and confiscated the printing press.[23]

When Shaikh Abdul Qadir became associated with the *Punjab Observer*, the foundation of the vigorous Urdu press of Lahore had already been laid. The first important Muslim newspaper was the weekly *Paisa Akhbar* which was started by Munshi Mahbub Alam in 1887 from Ferozewala (in Gujranwala District) but was moved two years later to Lahore. Here, it flourished and became a daily, with a number of associated journals, including a weekly on the lines of the English *Tit-Bits*, and a monthly (*Sharif Bibian*) for

23. *Vide Rais-ul-Ahrar Maulana Habib-ur-Rahman Ludhianawi*, pp. 71–72. In some articles regarding Mian Muhammad Shafi it has been stated that the *Observer* was sponsored by a Committee, of which Mian Shafi was the Secretary. This Committee was, presumably, only to help the newspaper. No reference to it is found in the biography of Maulana Habib-ur-Rahman on the relevant report of the Educational Conference.

ladies.[24] Another early newspaper of importance was the *Vakil* of Amritsar, which gave powerful support to the Aligarh movement, and at one time had Maulana Abul Kalam Azad as its editor. Maulvi Insha Ullah Khan who became the editor of the *Vakil* in 1895 started his own newspaper, the *Vatan*, in 1902. It concentrated on news and articles regarding Turkey and exercised great influence at one time. Like the *Paisa Akhbar* and the *Vakil*, it had its Book Depot, from which a number of publications, mostly relating to the developments in the Ottoman Turkey, were issued.

By its concentrated attention on the affairs of the Ottoman Turkey, the *Vatan* had introduced a new note in Indo-Muslim journalism, but the newspaper which gave most vigorous expression to this trend and became not only the mouthpiece of the new, independent journalism but also a powerful instrument for infusing a vigorous political life in the province, was the *Zamindar*. It was started in 1903 by Munshi Siraj-ud-Din Ahmad, the father of Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, and his step-brothers, Professor Hameed Ahmad Khan, and Maulana Hamid Ali Khan. As the name implies, the newspaper was originally established to serve the interests of the agriculturist community. Its founder was active in the agitation which flared up in 1907 against the stringent provisions of the Canal Colonies Bill. Along with (Sir) Chaudhri Shahab-ud-Din (later Speaker of the Punjab Legislative Assembly and a prominent Unionist leader), he organised a Bar Zamindars Association, and started active agitation against the proposed measure. Some non-Muslim politicians like Lala Lajpat Rai and Sardar Ajit Singh also joined the movement. The Government externed them to Mandalay, but the agitation died down as the Viceroy refused his assent to the proposed Bill and the grievance of the Zamindars of the Colony were removed. Munshi Siraj-ud-Din Ahmad died in 1908, and the *Zamindar* was taken over by his illustrious son, Zafar Ali Khan, who was a graduate of Aligarh and had already established a literary reputation by

24. Munshi Mahbub Alam's interest in women's education and welfare was maintained by his daughter, Fatimah Begum, who was the Secretary of the Girls' Section of the Punjab Muslim Students Federation, took active part in the struggle for Pakistan and established a Girls' College at Lahore.

his editorship of the *Deccan Review* and authorship of a number of books of high literary merit. He was young, forceful and courageous, and enthusiastically responded to the new political trends. In his hands the *Zamindar* became the most influential Urdu daily of Northern India and his role in politics was second only to that of Ali Brothers and Abul Kalam Azad during the Khilafat movement.

Justice Shah Din and Mian Muhammad Shafi

In political field, the era of Syed Ahmad's contemporaries was coming to an end at the close of the nineteenth century, but young Muslim barristers were now filling the void. In the historic Deputation which successfully urged before Lord Minto the Muslim case for separate electorates were two such young men—Mian Shah Din and Mian Muhammad Shafi.

Mian Shah Din (b. 1868) belonged to the well-known *Mian family* of Baghbanpura. In 1887, he graduated from the Government College, Lahore, and left for higher study of law in England, being the first Muslim from the Punjab to go abroad for this purpose. While in England he joined (Sir) Abdul Rahim and others in the foundation of the Anjuman-i Islamiyah, London, on 10 November 1889. This was the first Muslim organisation of its kind in the United Kingdom and Shah Din was elected its Vice-President. On return to Lahore, Shah Din started legal practice, but also evinced keen interest in public work. In 1891, he established Young Men Muhammadan Association at Lahore. Two years later he read at the All-India Mohammadan Educational Conference a learned and thoughtful paper on "The Education of Musalmans in the Punjab," which remains a mine of information for the historian.[25] This paper impressed Syed Ahmad Khan so much that Shah Din was chosen, at the early age of twenty-six, to preside over the next session of the Educational Conference. Shah Din was a member of the Simla Deputation which waited on Lord Minto in 1906. After the All-India Muslim League was

25. It appears in Mian Bashir Ahmad, op. cit. pp., 197–262.

established, an active provincial branch[26] was organised in the Punjab in November 1907. Shah Din was elected its President, but soon had to resign on his appointment as Judge of the Chief Court of the Punjab. This curtailed his political activities, but he continued to take interest in educational and literary work and, in 1913, again presided over the Educational Conference. His death in 1918 at a comparatively early age of fifty, which was the occasion of a touching elegy by Iqbal, brought to an end a career of great promise and usefulness.

The void created by Mian Shah Din's appointment to the Chief Court was filled by his cousin and brother-in-law, Mian Muhammad Shafi. He was born on 10 March 1869 and went to England to study for the Bar in August 1889. He also took active interest in Anjuman-i Islamiyah of London and was elected its President for a term. He returned home in 1892. After some years' practice at Hoshiarpur, he moved to Lahore in the beginning of 1898. He interested himself in public affairs and was a member of the Simla Deputation. When a branch of the All-India Muslim League was started in November 1907, he became its General Secretary. His differences with Mian Fazl-i Husain started about the same time. Mian Fazl-i Husain had started an organisation for which he coined the name of "Muslim League" and which held its first meeting in February 1906. A few months later Mian Muhammad Shafi organised a Muslim Association, but when the All-India Muslim League was formed, he formed a powerful branch in the Punjab of which he became the General Secretary. This branch, organised in November 1907, was known as the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, while Fazl-i Husain also continued to call his organisation by a similar name. Both claimed allegiance to the All-India Muslim League and both had attended the first formal session of that body at Karachi in December 1907. Their differences came to a head at the

26. For a detailed account of the inaugural meeting, held on 30 November 1907, see an article "Tarikh-i Muslim League Ke Do Aham Warq" by Muhammad Anwar Chaudhri in the Urdu bi-monthly *Nusrat*, Lahore, January–February 1968.

second meeting of the Muslim League. "The second sitting of the Aligarh meeting dealt with the problem of squaring up the differences between the two provincial Leagues in the Punjab. The whole of the Muslim community was anxious on this score. Mian Muhammad Shafi presented the names of twenty-four members and Mian Fazal-i Husain of eighteen to constitute (the executive of) the Punjab Provincial League. After long discussions, it was decided that both of them should confer together and arrive at a unanimous decision to submit the names of twenty-four members, which was actually done. In this way, the ill prospect of disunion in the Punjab was shattered."[27] As a result of the compromise, Mian Muhammad Shafi continued as General Secretary of the Punjab Muslim League while Mian Fazl-i Husain became Joint Secretary, but, as admitted by Mian Fazl-i Husain's son and biographer, "most of the work in connection with the Muslim demands in the forthcoming [Minto-Morley] reforms was the result of the efforts of Mian Muhammad Shafi and Mian Shah Din". Shafi presided over the annual session of the All-India Muslim League in 1913 and retained his control of the Provincial League till 1916, when his organisation was disaffiliated by the All-India Muslim League. According to his daughter Begum Shah Nawaz, Mian Shafi's differences with the All-India body were due to his opposition to the "Lucknow Pact which sacrificed the Muslim interests in the Punjab and Bengal".[28] In July 1919, Mian Muhammad Shafi, who had been elected the President of the Chief Court Bar, became a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council. The fact that he was taken away from the Punjab at a time when, owing to the introduction of the Dyarchy, politics was to become fruitful in the provincial sphere, in a way, reduced his usefulness. His tenure as Education Member was, however, marked by many important developments,

27. Lal Bahadur, *The Muslim League, Its History, Activities and Achievements*, p. 73.

28. *Vide* the account of an interview with Begum Shah Nawaz in Moizudin Ahmad, "The Working of Dyarchy in the Punjab" (unpublished Punjab University M.A. Thesis).

including the setting up of the Muslim University of Aligarh. When he returned after completing five years' term, he again became active in Muslim politics, and played an important role when the Simon Commission visited India and, again, at the first Round Table Conference. He passed away on 7 January 1932, shortly after his appointment as Education Member of the Government of India during Sir Fazl-i Husain's absence on deputation in South Africa.

New Hindu Movements and Economic Exploitation of the Muslims

While outlining the pioneering efforts for Muslim uplift in the Punjab it may be useful to refer to some new developments in the Hindu community which had far-reaching consequences. The Punjab was populated by three communities—Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs. The relations between the Sikhs and the Muslims sharply deteriorated during the last days of the Mughul rule, but steadied during the nineteenth century and these two—basically agricultural—communities found much in common in the economic sphere. The relations between the Hindus and the Muslims had not involved that conflict and violence which characterised the Sikh-Muslim relations during the decline of the Mughul empire, but the Hindu revival of the nineteenth century and particularly the exposure of the Hindus to the new British-inspired school of history which depicted Muslim rulers as their ruthless persecutors laid the basis for a new situation. Writing about his school days, Lala Lajpat Rai says:

"At that time a book on Indian history called *Waqiat-i-Hind* used to be taught at Government schools. That book created in me the feeling that Mussalmans had subjected the Hindus to great tyranny. Gradually the respect for Islam that I had acquired from the early training began to change into hatred because of the study of *Waqiat-i-Hind*."[29]

The Brahmo Samaj, which was introduced in the Punjab in 1863 and of which the most prominent leader was Babu Navin

29. *Autobiographical Writings*, p. 77.

Chander Roy[30] had, already, created a rift in the province by carrying on an agitation in favour of Hindi against Urdu. Even under the Sikh rule, no attempt had been made to disturb the linguistic situation in the province and Persian remained the official language. When the British took over they adopted Urdu, involving a natural transition from Persian. Now the Bengali officials—headed by Navin Chander Roy—began to agitate for Hindi. They, at any rate, were Brahmo Samajists and, although protagonists of the Hindu tradition in the cultural sphere, were not aggressive in the religious field. The introduction of Arya Samaj made matters much worse. In fact, the rise of the Arya Samaj and the hold which that militant, revivalist organisation secured over the Hindu community in the Punjab made Hindu-Muslim conflict inevitable. Not only were the writings of the Samajist leaders—including the *Satyarth Prakash* of Dayanand, the founder—full of attacks on Islam and the Holy Prophet, but the Samaj adopted an anti-Muslim attitude in all matters. About Rai Bahadur Mul Raj, the first President of Lahore Arya Samaj, who, incidentally, was a high government officer (a Divisional and Sessions Judge), Lajpat Rai says that he had "no faith in Hindu-Muslim unity". He was even cool towards the Indian National Congress as he argued that this "would divert energy from the work for Hindu solidarity". (This, however, did not stop him from taking "a prominent part" in the Congress session which was held at Lahore in 1893. "Being in state employ he could not join as a member but he attended the Subjects Committee meetings . . . informally. Rai Mul Raj was a clever man, but without principles.) Under him and his co-workers not only were attempts made for the promotion of Hindi and revival of Hindu religion, but the Hindus were organised as distinct from and, in fact, in opposition to the Muslims in all spheres—economic, political, etc.

30. Before the rise of the Arya Samaj, Navin Chander Roy was the principal protagonist of Hindi in the Punjab. He was an important government official, leader of the Brahmo Samaj, Secretary of the English Section (and presumably the administrative secretary) of Leitner's Anjuman and Secretary of the Indian Association. A study of his career will throw light on early Bengali influences in the Punjab.

The Muslims were systematically excluded from even those public institutions which came to be dominated by the Arya Samajists. One such institution was the University of the Punjab which had been established with the financial contribution of all communities and was maintained out of public funds, but when the (Arya Samajist) D.A.V. College gained a controlling influence, no Muslim could hope to find a place in its vast organisation—except, perhaps, in Arabic and Persian departments. The position was even worse in institutions like the Punjab National Bank (started in 1895 under the influence of Rai Mul Raj and others) and the private—or semi-private—organisations which controlled the new economic life of the province.

The Arya Samaj was first introduced in Lahore in 1877 and before long its branches were set up in all district headquarters and other important places. As Lajpat Rai says: "The best of the [Hindu] Punjabi intelligentsia was in the Arya Samaj." He says elsewhere: "Several of the most distinguished people amongst the young Punjabis who got degrees at the Calcutta University were members of the Samaj. Likewise many amongst the first batches of those who qualified as Assistant Surgeons or Vakils joined the Samaj. . . . Besides the people who had received education there was a considerable number of the middle-class people who held different employments in government offices." No movement in the Punjab could flourish without the Samaj, "for the Samaj was the only living organisation of the province and many of the leading lawyers were Samajists". The Arya Samaj attracted a number of dedicated souls, like Mahatma Hans Raj, who built up the D.A.V. College, Lala Lajpat Rai and others, and they worked systematically and with a fanatical zeal. Gradually, the Arya Samaj came to dominate the entire Hindu community in the province[31] and its policy of aggressive Hindu communalism—

31. In 1893, the Congress met at Lahore. According to Lajpat Rai, the Arya Samajist leader "Rai Mul Raj took a prominent part in that session". At this session "a Muhammadan delegate persuaded Dadabhai Naoroji, and Hume . . . to accept certain resolutions granting special concessions to Muhammadans. . . ." There was such a furore that the resolution had to be withdrawn. "Mr. Hume fumed and fretted, and lost his temper and became ill" (Nagendranath Gupta, *Reflections and Reminiscences*, p. 163).

in religious, cultural and economic spheres—came to be adopted, in greater or smaller degree, by all vocal sections of the Hindu community. Not only did this result in a deep-rooted cleavage between the Hindus and the Muslims in the province, making the Punjab "the Ulster of India," but the Arya Samajists from the Punjab took the lead in accentuating these differences in other parts of the subcontinent. At a later date, Lala Lajpat Rai took the lead in opposing C.R. Das's Bengal Pact (at the Cocanada Congress held in Decmber 1923), and was again mainly responsible for the failure of the All-Parties Conference in January 1925 to evolve a National Pact in place of the Lucknow Pact.[32] The Arya Samajists from the Punjab led the agitation against the Nizam of Hyderabad. Their biggest impact was, however, in the Punjab itself, where the Muslims were the main victims of their exclusiveness and discrimination. They sought to dominate all spheres of provincial life—political, educational and economic—to the exclusion of Muslims. They not only kept Muslims outside such institutions as the Punjab National Bank, Bharat Insurance Co., but gradually excluded Hindus like Harkishan Lal, who had been brought up in the cosmopolitan tradition of Sardar Dayal Singh. They even tried to take over from Muslims the few professions—like the leather business—which remained open to them owing to Hindu orthodoxy. Bhalla, a cousin of Mahatma Hans Raj, opened the first "Hindus' Own Shoes Shop"!

The economic basis[33] of the Hindu-Muslim conflict and the subsequent struggle for Pakistan becomes clear by a study of Gauba's *Consequences of Pakistan*. In his book he did not favour the creation of Pakistan but had to observe:

"Hindu directors of companies may denounce Mr. Jinnah for promoting the two-nation theory. If Mr. Jinnah lays emphasis upon

32. It is not surprising that Lajpat Rai, who was the principal Arya Samajist leader in politics as Hans Raj was in education, was the first to suggest (in December 1924) a partitioning of the Punjab (and of Bengal), though he presumed that Hindu and Muslim governments would be united under a National Federal Government.

33. The social basis of the demand for Pakistan can be seen in Chaudhry Afzal Haq's *Pakistan and Untouchability*.

this by words, they prove it by conduct. Take great commercial institutions like the Punjab National Bank, the United Commercial Bank, the Lakshmi Insurance Company, the Bharat Bank and the Bharat Insurance Company. You will hardly see a Muslim anywhere. The Lahore Electric Supply Company, a Company to whose prosperity Muslim consumers have contributed as much as Hindu consumers, employed no Muslim in its executive or clerical staffs, until faced with the pressure of acquisition by the Punjab Government. . . .

"Sir Ganga Ram, the philanthropist, made no secret that he would admit no Muslims to any of his benefactions. He was a kindly gentleman but no good Samaritan.

"The *Tribune* newspaper, although founded to promote nationalism, has never had a Muslim Trustee or a Muslim Editor, or a Muslim Manager. Its reporters and sub-editors are all Hindus. . . .

"And this in a national Trust! It may be argued for the Sir Ganga Ram Trust that the donor was a communalist and wished to exclude Muslims; his wishes are being followed.

"But Dyal Singh Majithia was not a communalist. One of his first Trustees was a Christian, but now the *Tribune*, the Dyal Singh Library, and the Dyal Singh College which were never intended to be communal institutions are primarily Hindu institutions."[34]

34. K.L. Gauba, *Consequences of Pakistan*, pp. 11–13.

Bal Raj Madhok, the Jana Sangh leader, in his biography of Dr Shyamaprasad Mookerjee, says with regard to the position of the Hindus of East Bengal in 1947 : "They owned nearly 80% of the national wealth of East Bengal. Majority of buildings and properties in each town of Bengal, in some cases more than 85% of town holdings, were owned by Hindus. 95% of the 1290 high schools and 47 colleges in East Bengal were privately organized and financed by them. . . ." The Hindus were not more than 25% of the population of East Bengal and the Muslim struggle against them was, broadly speaking, the struggle of the "have-notes" against the "haves". Lord Cassey, Governor of Bengal, who was very friendly to Gandhi and Congress leaders, points out in his *Personal Experience, 1939–46*, that the struggle between the Hindus and Muslims in Bengal was "primarily economic". Writing about his *experience in Bengal*, he says : "Another factor which obstructed good administration was Hindu-Muslim rivalry and distrust, which was known as Communalism. The reasons for this rivalry were many, but in their modern form I believed that they were primarily economic. The Muslims in Bengal outnumbered the Hindus, but they were generally poorer and less well educated. The Muslims were energetic in their efforts to improve their economic position, which stimulated them to be abnormally active in the search for jobs in the Government Service."

Gauba has referred mainly to the non-employment of the Muslims by the great commercial institutions, but the Muslims suffered not only on account of loss of jobs but also as the big concerns like the Punjab National Bank, the Lakshmi Insurance Company and Lahore Electric Supply Company could help or hinder the industrial and commercial development. Their advance of credit and supply of power had a good deal to do with the success of an industrial or a commercial venture. The result of the discrimination against the Muslims was, therefore, far more extensive than would be shown merely by the position of employees.

The manner in which the Hindus, occasionally, tried to exercise their economic supremacy may be seen from a contemporary account of Hindu-Muslim tension in 1885. In that year the dates of Dussehra and Muharram coincided and some Hindu boys stoned the Muharram procession. The police took punitive action against them. On this "the Hindus conferred amongst themselves so that nothing should be sold to the Muslims, Muslim tenants should be immediately ejected by the Hindu landlords, and loans should be promptly called back from the [Muslim] debtors". The weekly *Karnamah* of Lucknow, which gave these details, added that according to the *Punjabi* (of Lahore) these plans were not of the illiterate masses but of the so-called "reformers".[35]

As compared with their co-religionists, the Muslims in the Punjab were slightly better off, but even their position was not very happy. With all the special efforts of their new leaders, the Muslims were far behind the sister community in modern education, and all the so-called "professions" were crowded by the Hindus. The latter were receiving a very disproportionate share of the state service and, of course, in commerce and industry, they had a virtual monopoly. With their strong economic position and by taking full advantage of the modern education the Hindus had begun to dominate even the political life of the province. In the early nineteenth century, political activity was largely

35. The *Karnamah*, Lucknow, 2 November 1885 (quoted in Imdad Sabri, *Tarikh-i Sahafat-i Urdu*, II, 361).

confined to the practising lawyers, and as they were mainly Hindus, political influence had also passed on to them.

Mian Fazl-i Husain (1877–1936)

Work in the Provincial Sphere. The man who brought about a complete change of the political scene was Mian Fazl-i Husain. He belonged to an old Muslim Rajput family, which was one of the few Muslim families to attain any distinction under the Sikhs. With the British occupation of the Punjab the family lost its original importance and Fazl-i Husain's father had to accept service under the British. By dint of ability and hard work he rose to be a District Judge, and was able to send his son to Cambridge for higher education. Fazl-i Husain, who was born in 1877 and was a class-fellow of Iqbal and a contemporary of Shaikh Abdul Qadir at Government College, Lahore, failed to qualify for the Indian Civil Service, but took a degree at Cambridge and returned a Barrister. He started legal practice at Sialkot in 1901, and four years later moved to the provincial capital.

Even while at Sialkot Fazl-i Husain used to contribute to the *Punjab Observer* and the *Makhzan*, but his activities in political and educational fields greatly increased when he moved to Lahore. In particular, he began to take active interest in the affairs of the Anjuman-i Himayat-i Islam. He was elected a member of its Managing Committee in 1905 and next year became Secretary of the College Committee, which office he continued to hold till his appointment as Education Minister of the Punjab in 1921. As Secretary of the College Committee, not only had Fazl-i Husain to build up Islamia College, Lahore, in its initial stages, but in 1920 had to face the determined onslaught on the College from Khilafat and Congress leaders who wanted the institution to give up its normal line of work and become a part of Gandhian scheme of national education.

Fazl-i Husain also interested himself in politics and, according to his biographer, set up "the first organization in India to call

itself the Muslim League".[36] The dispute which arose after the subsequent establishment of the All-India Muslim League and organisation of its Punjab branch by Mian Muhammad Shafi has been described earlier. Fazl-i Husain's supporters included many progressive and talented young men like "Pir Taj-ud-Din, Malik Barkat Ali, Dr Muhammad Iqbal, Khalifah Shuja-ud-Din, Chaudhri Shahab-ud-Din and Ghulam Bhik Nairang," but Mian Muhammad Shafi retained the control of the Provincial Muslim League till 1916. He, along with Justice Shah Din, had done valuable work for the uplift of the Punjab Muslims, but was out of sympathy with the growing League-Congress collaboration, and perhaps, also, to the more radical approach now adopted by the Muslim League. This brought him in conflict, not only with the younger group in the province, but also with the All-India Muslim League. The result was that on 28 December 1916 the All-India Muslim League disaffiliated the old Punjab Muslim League, headed by Mian Muhammad Shafi, and accepted the affiliation of the new body organised by the progressive group. Soon Fazl-i Husain became the General Secretary of the new Punjab Muslim League, and continued to hold that office till 1920.

Even before this Mian Fazl-i Husain had entered active politics, but on another platform. He was a member of the Congress since 1905, but did not take a vigorous interest in political affairs till 1913. In 1915, he was in "the thick of the fray". In 1916, he was elected to the Punjab Legislative Council, aud distinguished himself by boldly sponsoring proposals which ran

36. Azim Hussain, op. cit., p. 96. The exact position may be better known after the papers of the All-India Muslim League (now with the Karachi University) have been examined. *Prima facie*, Azim Husain's statement finds support in the words of Muhammad Noman, who compiled his *Muslim India* under the guidance of the Quaid-i Azam and Liaqat Ali Khan and had access to the records of the Muslim League. Referring to different Muslim associations, which sent up suggestions for the establishment of a Muslim political organisation, Noman adds, "one of them being the Muslim League of the Punjab, which was the first organization to call itself as the Muslim League" (*Muslim India*, p. 64).

counter to the known views of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, the all-powerful Lieutenant-Governor of the province. The manner in which the Punjab had been kept back constitutionally as compared with other provinces has been outlined earlier. Under Minto-Morley Reforms, the Punjab had only 19% elected members as against 53% in Bengal and 48% in Bombay. Now the powerful Lieutenant-Governor began to urge that the proposed (Montagu-Chelmsford) Reforms should not be extended to his province, but Fazl-i Husain started mobilising public opinion against this proposal. He organised several meetings for the purpose, and vigorously urged an equality of treatment for the Punjab. He had presided over an important Provincial Conference with distinction as early as in 1917, and in the absence of Lala Lajpat Rai, who was staying outside India, was the most important Congress leader in the province.

Sir George Anderson says in his sketch of Mian Fazl-i Husain :

"In politics he was what may be termed a progressive nationalist and he soon earned the reputation of being a staunch critic and opponent of the old-time bureaucracy. Had events pursued a different course he might, along with many others of his political associates, have found himself in gaol as a political offender." [37]

This very nearly happened, when serious trouble started in the Punjab, leading to the declaration of Martial Law and adoption of repressive measures associated with Sir Michael O'Dwyer's regime. On 16 April 1919, when Fazl-i Husain had gone to Simla to persuade the Central Government to intervene in the Punjab, orders for his arrest were issued, but were withdrawn at the intervention of the Government of India.

Fazl-i Husain continued to associate with the Indian National Congress, but when that body decided on a policy of Non-Cooperation and the boycott of Councils set up under Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme, he resigned. He offered himself for election to the Provincial Legislative Council and was duly elected.

On 26 May 1919, O'Dwyer was succeeded as Lieutenant-

37. Rushbrook-Williams, Ed., *Great Men of India*, p. 239.

Governor by Sir Edward Maclagan, a cultured and liberal administrator. By this time Mian Shah Din had passed away (1918) and in July 1919 Mian Muhammad Shafi had joined the Viceroy's Executive Council. Fazl-i Husain was now the most prominent Muslim leader in the province and became Minister for Education on 3 January 1921, continuing to hold this portfolio till his appointment as Revenue Member in the beginning of 1926.

Fazl-i Husain's tenure of office as Education Minister marks an epoch in the annals, not only of the educational, but also of the political life of the Punjab. In sheer departmental efficiency and spread of education in the province, Fazl-i Husain's ministry surpassed all others in the subcontinent. The Punjab, which had been educationally one of the most backward provinces, came close to the top. "While before the Reforms the percentage of the total population in the Punjab receiving instruction in all institutions had been 2·42 per cent, after six years under the system, it was 6·71 per cent." [38] This was all the more remarkable as the increase in literacy had been obtained mainly by extension of education in the backward areas and amongst classes educationally backward. The Muslims greatly benefited by this. During the first two years of Fazl-i Husain's regime, "the Muslims in all institutions increased by 42·3 per cent while the increase amongst Hindus was barely 19·6 per cent". [39] This expansion was secured largely by a vigorous drive, by offering a number of free studentships and scholarships to backward communities, including Muslims, and by opening a large number of government educational institutions in educationally backward areas. The expansion was not only at the school level. In the sphere of higher education, Fazl-i Husain launched a new experiment by opening Government Intermediate Colleges all over the province. Parents who could not afford, or did not want to send their children to Lahore, were able to get them preliminary college education nearer home. Thus the way to higher education was paved.

The entire province benefited by the vigorous drive launched under Fazl-i Husain, but the Muslims received special attention.

38. Azim Hussain, op. cit., p. 132.

39. Ibid., p. 136.

Hitherto, very few Muslims were able to gain admission to the prestigious institutions like Medical College and Government College of Lahore. Fazl-i Husain ordered reservation of seats for them in these institutions in proportion to their representation under the Lucknow Pact (viz. 40%). This meant that the Muslim students were able to receive higher education in the best educational institutions and, by competing with Hindu fellow-students, their intellectual and mental standards improved. Already Fazl-i Husain had placed the Muslim community under a heavy debt by devoting a lifetime to their only institution for higher education —Islamia College, Lahore. Now he was able to perform these services on a much vaster scale and at a higher level. The principle of communal reservation of seats was extended to newly-opened Government Intermediate Colleges and, in fact, to all government institutions for higher education. With nearly half their students from amongst Muslims and increased appointment of Muslim staff, these institutions virtually became miniature Islamia Colleges. The effect this had on the spread of higher education amongst Muslims of the province and, in fact, on a general intellectual renaissance amongst them may be easily imagined. The steep rise in educational standards showed itself, not only in developments within the province, but even in the competitive examinations for All-India Services. Next to Muslims from the U.P., which was *par excellence* the centre of Muslim culture and education, those from the Punjab were most successful. Mian Fazl-i Husain also adopted the policy of giving representation on these lines to Muslims seeking positions in the departments under him, subject to their having adequate qualifications. These measures were bitterly criticised by the Hindu press and even disliked by some British administrators, but Fazl-i Husain persisted in them, and such was his hold over the members of the Provincial Legislature that he successfully carried out his policy. Largely under his influence the Punjab Government accepted the principle of laying down Muslim quota in services, and in course of time this was adopted in other provinces and ultimately by the Government of India.

These measures improved the position of Muslims in admin-

istrative and educational spheres, and gave them a new sense of confidence. Besides, Fazl-i Husain took steps in the political field which made the Muslims, particularly from the rural areas, dominant in the affairs of the province. The basis for this had been laid under the Lucknow Pact, under which the Muslims had been given 50% of the elected seats. Fazl-i Husain took full advantage of the position and even improved upon it. He organised a party which was originally called the Rural Party and later designated National Unionist or more generally the Unionist Party, by which the large majority of Muslim members and a few non-Muslims from rural areas could constitute a clear majority amongst elected members and thus dominate the Legislative Council.

The impact which Fazl-i Husain made on the political life of the Punjab was not only due to new, imaginative schemes or even the political organisation which gave him virtual control of the provincial legislature, but also to the bold, effective manner in which he carried out his policies and programmes. Coatman, an officer of the Imperial Police and later Director of Information, Government of India, wrote about him in 1932: "Sir Fazl-i-Husain belongs to a family which was famous in the days of Moghuls, and he himself always carries with him some air of those splendid days. He is a man of inflexible will and immutable purpose, with a mind like diamond which can cut its way through anything." This was a rare thing amongst those who co-operated with the Government in that era, particularly in the Punjab where British bureaucracy was well entrenched and ministers were favoured for their pliability. Sir Fazl-i Husain changed this. Not only did he stoutly resist all onslaughts from the Hindu press and the legislators, but had a show-down with some senior British officers, and won the day. Col. Sutherland, the Principal of Medical College, objected to the reservation of seats for the Muslims and had to step down as a professor. In 1929, Fazl-i Husain, as Revenue Member, obtained the Governor's consent to hold a *Durbar* at Gujranwala to make certain announcements and asked Kenneway, the Commissioner of Lahore, to arrange the *Durbar* and attend. The British Commissioner was unwilling to attend a

Durbar where he would have to rank lower than an Indian. The matter went up to the Governor, and Kenneway had to proceed on leave preparatory to premature retirement.

These and other incidents—some true, some half-true, some apocryphal—built up the Fazl-i Husain legend. They did more. Hithero the economic scene was dominated by the Hindu money-lender and the political scene by the Hindu lawyer. The University was controlled by the D.A.V. College. Now it looked as if political power had passed to the Muslims, and that power could be used to redress balance in other spheres. The Muslims got a new self-confidence, while the Hindus were unnerved. When the determined attempts of *The Tribune*, Professor Gulshan Rai and Hindu leaders to dislodge Fazl-i Husain failed, they began to think of other measures. In desperation Lala Lajpat Rai wrote a series of articles openly advocating that the Punjab should be divided into Eastern and Western zones. He saw the writing on the wall and wanted to salvage as much from the wreck as possible!

In spite of Fazl-i Husain's determined efforts to provide for Muslims in various spheres in accordance with their agreed share at Lucknow, he was free from individual favouritism and was exceedingly careful and correct in all that he did. Still many British officers did not like his ways and the position he had built up for himself. Sir Malcolm Hailey, another strong man who succeeded Sir Edward Maclagan as Governor in June 1924, set about undermining his position.[40] Mian Fazl-i Husain's appointment as Revenue Member in 1926 was ostensibly a promotion, but by removing him from the sphere of the Transferred Departments where he influenced other ministries besides his own, in reality, his wings were clipped. Still he continued to work, as far as possible, in the furtherance of the policy which had become associated with his name. He tried to ensure that the Unionist Party did not disintegrate and brought many measures like the Regulation of Money-

40. Presumably, this was with the support of the new Viceroy, Lord Irwin, who tried to follow a pro-Congress policy, and was not favourable to the Muslim point of view.

lenders' (Accounts) Bill to safeguard the interests of rural debtors. Steps were taken to nullify, by legislative measures, the attempts made by Chief Justice Shadi Lal to water down the provisions of the Land Alienation Act. Fazl-i Husain maintained his sturdy independence all the while, and the premature retirement of Commissioner Kenneway took place in 1929.

Not the least important of Fazl-i Husain's activities in these days was the effort he made to ensure that Muslims got their due share in the coming reforms, which were likely to be granted as a result of the review of the constitution by the Simon Commission. As Revenue Member, he wrote a minute of dissent differing from Sir Malcolm Hailey's government, which had put forward the view that the communal representation in services had led to a lowering of administrative standards. Even now Fazl-i Husain's hold over the Unionist Party was complete, and the Sub-Committee appointed by the Punjab Legislative Assembly which had a majority of Unionist members made proposals to the Simon Commission echoing the Muslim demands, although two of the Unionist members—Chhotu Ram and Owen Roberts—were non-Muslims.

Work in All-India Sphere. In 1930, Mian Fazl-i Husain was appointed Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council. This was the time when the question of India's future was being considered at the highest level in Britain, and Fazl-i Husain's tenure of office in Government of India coincided with far-reaching constitutional developments—Round Table Conferences, grant of full political status to N.-W.F.P., Communal Award, Separation of Sind, Government of India Act of 1935, etc. Fazl-i Husain's contribution to these momentous developments will be described later, but this was not the first occasion when he had played an important role in all-India affairs. In a way, the position which he built up for the Muslims in the Punjab had its repercussions in all-India sphere, but he had made a more direct contribution also. Fazl-i Husain was associated with the All-India Muslim League since its inception and he had attended many of its sessions including the one held at Lucknow in 1916, but hitherto his role had been comparatively a minor one. He made his first major contribution

to the all-India politics in 1924. By then, in addition to a long career of political eminence in the provincial sphere, he had been a minister of the Punjab Government for three years. He had been able to take some effective steps to improve the Muslim position, but this had frightened the Punjab Hindus. Not only did they carry on ceaseless propaganda against him and his policy, but started a vigorous campaign for replacement of Separate Electorates by Joint Electorates. In view of the countrywide agitation of the Congress, a further advance on the road to self-government appeared inevitable, but there was no active political organisation to look after the Muslim interests. The Khilafat movement and the affairs outside the Indo-Pak subcontinent completely absorbed Muslim attention, and there was no life left in the All-India Muslim League. In fact, it had held no proper session for almost four years. Fazl-i Husain "revived the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and invited the All-India Muslim League to hold its session at Lahore". This special session was held on 25 and 26 May 1924, and was presided over by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who also had remained unaffected by the emotional frenzy of the period and was keen to have a representative Muslim gathering to formulate Muslim demands. This session passed a comprehensive resolution on Muslim demands which also marked a far-reaching change in the political goal of Muslim India. Hitherto, all emphasis was on providing safeguards or weightage for Muslim minorities. Now a provision was made that the adequate and effective representation to minorities would be subject "to the essential proviso that no majority shall be reduced to a minority or even an equality". This was to ensure that Muslim majorities should remain unaffected in Muslim majority areas. It was also laid down that if there was any territorial redistribution, it should "not in any way affect the Muslim majority of population in the Punjab, Bengal and N.-W.F. provinces". Another clause of the resolution provided that the system of representation "shall continue to be by means of separate electorates".

During the momentous meeting at Lahore, Fazl-i Husain tried to remain in the background and spoke in the open session only

when, owing to Maulana Muhammad Ali's eloquent plea, an agreed amendment moved by Dr Zia-ud-Din was in danger of being defeated, but the contemporary accounts leave no doubt as to who was the moving spirit behind this historic session. *The Indian Quarterly Register*, which became the precursor of *The Indian Annual Register*, has the following entry on this point:

"The revival of the League after four years, and at Lahore under the influence of Mian Fazl-i-Husain, the great anti-Hindu and anti-Sikh Moslem Minister of Punjab who is responsible for the strong wave of communal feeling of the Muslims that is swaying the whole country since Gandhi's and the Ali Brothers' Hindu-Moslem unity of 1921, lent colour to a strong suspicion that it was an attempt on the part of the Minister further to rally the Moslems against other communities, and to wean them from the Congress. Not more than 33 members out of a total of 130 came from outside the Punjab, most of whom even were members of the Assembly who were going to attend its Simla session next week."[41]

Contemporary newspapers also made clear the part of Mian Fazl-i Husain in the League session of 1924. For example, the *Zamindar* of Lahore, which represented the Khilafatist-Nationalist group, wrote in a leading article dated 29 May 1924 and headed "The Fifteenth Session of the Muslim League—The Activities of the Moderates and Loyalists":

"Although, in order to deceive the Muslims, long resolutions were passed in favour of Swaraj and Hindu-Muslim unity, yet the truth is that behind all these machinations was the hand of Mian Fazl-i Husain and his supporters."

The main resolution moved by Sir Abdul Qadir incorporated six basic demands of Muslim India. A separate resolution, moved by Abdul Aziz of Peshawar and seconded by Abdul Majid Qureshi of Lahore added another—the demand for introduction of reforms in N.-W.F.P., and of placing that "province in all respects in a position of equality with the other major provinces of India". These seven demands, later enlarged by demands for separation of Sind, grant of reforms to Baluchistan, etc., were crystallised into Jinnah's Fourteen Points and, later, in the resolution of All-Parties

41. *The Indian Quarterly Register*, January-March 1924, p. 657.

Muslim Conference.

Fazl-i Husain's incursion into all-India politics in 1924 was something of a landmark in the history of the Muslim struggle. Not only did the holding of a successful session mean the revival of the All-India Muslim League, after four years of "suspended animation," but its resolutions on Muslim demands marked the beginning of a new phase in the Muslim struggle. The Muslims from majority and minority provinces had agreed on their new political goal. Minorities were to get weightage, but Muslim majorities were not to be reduced to a minority or even an equality. This pattern of Muslim case, evolved through Fazl-i Husain's efforts in 1924, continued unchanged till the final struggle which resulted in the establishment of Pakistan, but in the meanwhile he had other contributions to make in all-India affairs—especially during the crucial years, when he was Viceroy's Executive Councillor.

Two Urdu writers with widely differing backgrounds[42] have recently studied the history of the period and have come to the conclusion that the task of the Muslim team at the Round Table Conference was greatly facilitated by Mian Fazl-i Husain's efforts at Delhi. The reasons for this are not difficult to see. Any Muslim member of the Viceroy's Executive Council was bound to be consulted in the choice of the Muslim delegates to the Round Table Conference. With his ability, determination, habit of taking infinite pains and the manner in which he had won Viceroy Willingdon's confidence, Fazl-i Husain was able to ensure that his choice in these matters was decisive. He seems to have been able to send whomsoever he wanted, and to keep out those he did not want—including Dr Ansari, whose nomination had been virtually promised to Mahatma Gandhi by Lord Irwin. Proper selection of Muslim representatives was an important step, but Fazl-i Husain did much more. He kept a vigilant eye on what was happening in London and gave constant advice to the Muslim delegates as to what they should do. He issued circular letters to delegates—e.g.

42. Dr Ashiq Husain Batalvi in his *Iqbal Kay Akhri Do Sal* and Syed Nur Ahmad in his *Martial Law Say Martial Law Tak*.

suggesting that they should elect His Highness The Aga Khan as their leader. To the key figures like The Aga Khan, Chaudhri Zafrullah Khan and Sir Shafaat Ahmad Khan (whose special assignment was to counteract Mr Jinnah's nationalistic efforts), he wrote regularly and at length. At crucial moments, he strengthened the hands of the Muslim delegation by support for its viewpoint from the Government of India or even articles in the Muslim press. In London, similar views were put forward in the India Council before the Secretary of State by Sir Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana with whom Fazl-i Husain was in constant touch.

The result of the co-ordinated work at London and Delhi was that Muslim demands were substantially met[43] in the Communal Award announced by the British Prime Minister on 16 August 1932—substantially, but not wholly. Separate electorates were retained, Muslim weightage in minority provinces was not disturbed. Full political status had already been granted to N.-W.F.P. Sind was, soon after the Award, separated from Bombay. The Muslims, with the help of a couple of special seats, got a majority in the Punjab but it was so precarious that a purely Muslim political organisation had no chance of forming government. Position was worse in Bengal, but as the Europeans, who held the balance of power, did not normally oppose the Muslims, weakness in Bengal did not make itself manifest. In N.-W.F.P. the non-Muslims got such heavy weightage—equivalent to three times their representation on population basis—that in a small house they had a controlling voice, in case of division of Muslim votes.

Still two new Muslim majority provinces had come into being. Muslim representation in Bengal had increased from 40% (allowed under the Lucknow Pact) to 48% and a nominal majority allowed

43. This is seen clearly if the provisions of the Communal Award and other decisions resulting from the Round Table Conference are compared with the recommendations of the Simon Commission, published on the eve of the Conference. Even Viceroy Irwin had clearly stated in his speech before Chelmsford Club, Simla (17 July 1926), that while there was no intention of curtailing the scope of Separate Electorates, "there is equally no intention of extending them". Under Communal Award there was one extension.

in the Punjab against parity of elected seats. Muslim position, though not wholly satisfactory, marked a substantial advance and provided in course of time an opportunity to the Supreme Leader—Quaid-i Azam—to lead the nation to its goal of a sovereign Muslim state.

In his efforts to safeguard Muslim interests Fazl-i Husain remained largely in the background—partly on account of the official position he occupied and partly on account of temperament (and ill-health), but those who knew were aware of the important role he was playing. F.W. Wilson, the Editor of *The Pioneer* of Allahabad, wrote in his book *The Indian Chaos*, published in 1932:

"In this Viceroy's [Lord Irwin's] latter period of office the Council was illumined by the presence of Sir Fazl-i-Husain, who was certainly one of the ablest brains in India, but who could not be described as friendly to the general desire for reform. *He looked upon his presence in the Executive Council as a means for safeguarding the interests of the Muslim community* [italics ours], and his policy was to delay any further reform until he had so consolidated his co-religionists that they would be in the position of demanding even more than their pound of flesh, when the moment for re-organisation occurred. It was also generally accepted as a fact, in India, that Sir Fazli had a very clear understanding with the Civil Service elements in the Government of India. It was generally supposed that this understanding comprised a support of the Civil Service point of view, in return for a support of Muslim claims."[44]

Letters from leading Muslims of different areas also indicate similar realisation of the importance of Fazl-i Husain's work. Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din wrote to him on 26 March 1931: "You are the only man who can save the Muslims from utter ruination." Sir Akbar Hydri wrote from England: "I am relying on you holding the Home Front while we [Round Table Conference delegates] are away in London." M.A. Khuro, who led the provincial struggle for the separation of Sind, wrote to Fazl-i Husain, after the battle had been won: "The Muslims of Sind are conscious of the fact that you have contributed to a very large

44. Frederick William Wilson, *The Indian Chaos*, p. 81.

extent towards their success in this matter, and I take this opportunity to thank you most warmly on their behalf."

An important achievement of Fazl-i Husain was the adoption of a resolution by the Government of India in 1934, fixing the Muslim proportion in services and laying down a detailed procedure to ensure that. Previously there was a reservation of 33⅓% vacancies for minorities, but higher posts usually went to Anglo-Indians, Indian Christians, etc. Now it was decided that at least 25% of all vacancies should be reserved for Muslims, and they could be considered for additional vacancies out of minorities' quota, if suitable candidates from other minorities were not available.

Mian Fazl-i Husain was easily the ablest Muslim who ever served on the Viceroy's Executive Council, but his health had now deteriorated very much. He was an old sufferer from a lung trouble and in 1932 he suffered a particularly serious breakdown. His recovery was only partial and, although he continued his activities till the end, he was a very sick man—he even thought of committing suicide at one stage—and there is considerable controversy about the policies and activities of his last days. Fazl-i Husain returned to the Punjab on 1 April 1935. Originally he intended to lead a retired life and, apart from giving occasional legal opinion at his residence, wished to spend his "time in prayer".[45] These wishes were, however, of no avail. Once he was in Lahore, his friends and admirers pressed him to return to politics and before long he was in the thick of affairs. He set to work with his usual thoroughness, and reorganised the Unionist Party, in readiness for the coming elections. His exclusive preoccupation, however, with the provincial requirements brought him in conflict with the Quaid-i Azam. His stature in national life, ability and services to the Muslims were known to the Quaid, who was now reorganising the Muslim League. The Quaid was very keen that Fazl-i Husain should give "a lead to the Mussalmans of India" at this crucial moment, and on 5 January 1936 wrote a letter inviting him to preside over the coming session of the League. This letter is of great

45. Letter to his wife, quoted by Azim Hussain, op. cit., p. 397.

interest as containing the Quaid's views about Fazl-i Husain, expressed six months and four days before the latter's death. He wrote:

"At the meeting of the Council of the All-India Muslim League, it was the unanimous wish of everyone that you should be asked to preside over the next session of the League. As soon as I suggested your name, it was cordially welcomed. I, along with many others, feel that at this moment no one can give a better lead to the Mussalmans of India than yourself. Of course, it will be a great honour to the League to have you to preside over our deliberations and I am confident that you will be welcomed universally and I trust that you will accept the call at this moment. I think that you can render the greatest service at this moment and add to your laurels, and I am very anxious that you should give me your authority to announce your name. We want a man of your calibre and experience, and nobody can so well, at this critical moment as far as I can see, perform that duty and render that service to the community as you would be able to. I am afraid I have perhaps not expressed adequately how strongly I feel that your presence is necessary mainly and solely in the interests of the community, but I hope you will understand and if you can do send me a wire 'Accept it'. Your refusal will be the greatest misfortune and a terrible disappointment to me personally."[46]

Fazl-i Husain had, however, different plans. His heart had been set on provincial autonomy for several years, and he felt that the centralised control of the provincial parties would render this impossible, especially in a province like the Punjab where the Muslims, in view of their nominal majority, needed non-Muslim votes. He also did not anticipate how quickly the British were to leave or how real the power of the ministers would be in 1937. He does not seem to have realised that the final phase of the struggle —"the war of succession"—was about to begin. Not only did he decline the opportunity to preside over the momentous session of the All-India Muslim League but gave no encouragement to the League leader when he visited Lahore in the last days of April 1936. He wrote to Sir Sikandar Hayat on 6 May 1936: "Jinnah's move in establishing a Central Parliamentary Board of the League was a wrong move, detrimental to Indian Muslims' interests," and

46. Ibid., pp. 306–07.

firmly set his face against any interference in provincial politics by the All-India Muslim League. Two iron wills were, now, in headlong collision. Jinnah is stated to have said to Raja Narendranath, during this visit: "Fazli thinks he carries the Punjab in his pocket. Raja Sahib, I am going to smash Fazli."[47] In the event, the assertions made in both these sentences proved correct. Fazl-i Husain died before the struggle started, but as the elections of 1936–37 showed, the Punjab was in his political heirs' "pocket". But this was only a pyrrhic victory. Ten years later new forces operating under the leadership of the Quaid-i Azam smashed the Unionist Party into smithreens!

The above account of the last encounter between Jinnah and Fazl-i Husain is based on Mian Fazl-i Husain's biography written by his son. The version given by Syed Nur Ahmad, who also had ample means of knowing what had happened, is less dramatic. He gives some pertinent questions which two participants raised, and continues to say:

"After this conversation, Mr Jinnah and Chaudhri Shahab-ud-Din (who also was present at the conversations) came out. There were a few reporters waiting for them. Mr Jinnah smiled and said to them, 'Gentelmen, we have agreed on two points. One is that both of us hold that our respective viewpoint is correct. The other is that after the results of elections are out, we shall meet again and exchange views.' But this meeting never took place. Some three months after this conversation Mian Fazl-i Husain passed away, on 8 August 1936. Provincial elections were to come several months later."[48]

Fazl-i Husain's differences with the Quaid have received a great deal of publicity, but apparently the attitude of the prominent Muslim leaders in other majority areas was not very different. Fazl-i Husain's discussions with the Quaid took place

47. Ibid., p. 310.

48. Syed Nur Ahmad, *Martial Law Say Martial Law Tak*, p. 180. Translated from Urdu. At page 188 of his book, Syed Nur Ahmad quotes Raja Gazanfar Ali Khan as saying that in April 1937 he reminded Sikandar Hayat Khan about Mian Fazl-i Husain's and Mr Jinnah's plans to exchange views after elections and inquired whether time for that had not arrived. Sikandar favoured this, but amongst other things he wished to see what shape the efforts of *rapproachement* between the Congress and the League would take.

in April 1936. The first meeting of the All-India Muslim League Parliamentary Board was held at Lahore several weeks later. About the response from Bengal, Hasan Ispahani writes: "Of the forty members from Bengal, only Abdul Rahman Siddiqi and I went to Lahore to attend the meeting of the Board."[49] At that time two major groups had emerged in Bengal to fight the coming elections. One was the United Muslim Party of Bengal, of which the leaders were Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din, Nawab Habibullah of Dacca, Nawab K.G.M. Farooqi of Ratanpur, H.S. Suhrawardy and others. According to Ispahani, "*Suhrawardy was the driving force.*"[50] The other group, viz. Krishak Proja Samity, contained younger and more radical elements—like the pro-Congress Nausher Ali, Shams-ud-Din Ahmad, Humayun Kabir, Nawabzadah Hasan Ali of Bogra—and was headed by A.K. Fazl-ul-Haq. Neither of these two groups, continues Ispahani, "wanted to have truck with the All-India Muslim League."[51] Fazl-ul-Haq's group opposed the Muslim League at the elections, but even the United Muslim Party, which later merged with the League, had, at least till the beginning of June 1936, strong objections to the elections being fought on the League ticket and to the establishment of a Muslim League parliamentary party in Bengal. The letter which Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy wrote, on behalf of the United Muslim Party, to the President of Muslim League on 4 June 1936 is an interesting document, as revealing the point of view of those who, while keen to safeguard Muslim interests and fully prepared to co-operate with the Muslim League in all-India matters, were anxious to avoid any complication resulting from the control of an all-India body—in their efforts to make arrangements suited to the local conditions. In his letter, Suhrawardy began by emphasising the points of agreement between the United Muslim Party and the All-India Muslim League. "While the Party feel it would be certainly advantageous to have a central

49. M.A.H. Ispahani, *Quaid-e-Azam—As I Knew Him*, p. 16. Presumably forty members were not all from Bengal, but constituted the bulk of the Board. Choudhry Khaliquzzaman gives a full list of fifty-four members, out of whom only seven were from Bengal (*Pathway to Pakistan*, pp. 416–17).

50. Ispahani, op. cit., p. 17.

51. Ibid.

Party formed on All-India basis, they at the same time are of opinion that local conditions may compel the Muslims for the purposes of the forthcoming Provincial elections to make local arrangements. We desire to assure you that the United Muslim Party, Bengal, in no way clashes with the All-India Muslim League or its Provincial Body. It has been formed with the same objects as suggested by the League in its excellently worded resolutions, namely, that the Muslims should organise themselves as one party with an advanced and progressive programme facilitating the education of the electorate and co-operation between groups with proximate aims and ideals."[52] Next, he gave reasons for setting up of the United Muslim Party and, while offering support and co-operation to the League, emphatically requested the League leader not to run the elections in Bengal on the League ticket. He wrote:

"We, therefore, are definitely of opinion that the elections should not be run on the ticket of the Muslim League. It will only create confusion, and bring about a cleavage in our ranks which we are most anxious to avoid, and which will ruin the cause of the Muslims in Bengal, and, possibly in other places, for decades to come. We would, therefore, request you not to run the elections in Bengal on the League ticket, or establish a party here for doing so. Apart from this you can always count on our co-operation and support."[53]

Hatim A. Alavi has given details of what happened in Sind, and it makes depressing reading. When he Quaid wished to visit Sind to prepare the ground for the coming elections, he wrote to Alavi who tried to arrange a dinner in his honour at which prominent Muslim leaders were to become joint hosts. Alavi made this proposal to a number of prominent Muslims. "The extent of demoralisation of Muslim public men in those days

52. Mukthar Masood, Ed., *Eye Witnesses of History*, pp. 8–9.

53. Ibid., p. 10. M.A.H. Ispahani does not say so, but apparently he was entrusted with the task of personally explaining the point of view of the United Muslim Party to the President of the Muslim League. Suhrawardy concluded his letter by saying: "Mr M.A.H. Ispahani proposes to attend the meeting of the League. He was present at our meeting, and he will explain to you the situation and place before you our point of view" (ibid., p. 10).

may be imagined from the fact that none of them was willing to be included in the list of hosts. . . . "[54] In the elections "Muslim League could win no seat." Alavi also "with Mr. Jinnah's permission joined the United Muslim Party."[55]

The position in N.-W.F.P. was similar. Farigh Bukhari has given an account of the visit paid by the Quaid to Peshawar in 1935. At that time the two prominent public leaders in Peshawar city were Khan Pir Bakhsh Khan and Sardar Abdul Rab Nishtar. In the mofussil the Khan Brothers and their *Khudai Khidmatgars* were dominant, but "even the two acknowledged leaders of Peshawar city gave no encouragement to the Quaid."[56] Sahibzadah Sir Abdul Qayum considered the Quaid's activities harmful to his interests. The response was so poor that not more than 200 attended the public meeting held in the extensive Shahi Bagh. Not a single League candidate was successful in the provincial elections.

Response from the Muslim minority provinces was better, especially from those groups which had no objection to co-operation with the Congress, but the dismal situation, which confronted the Quaid in 1936—and the measure of his ultimate achievement—may be judged by the fact that at this juncture even Nawabzadah Liaqat Ali Khan, who had been elected Secretary of the All-India Muslim League in 1936, kept away from the League platform. After pointing out that U.P. sent a strong contingent to the meeting of All-India Muslim League Parliamentary Board held at Lahore in June 1936, Ispahani says:

"The one who was missing and later became General Secretary and one of the pillars of the Pakistan movement and its first Prime Minister after Independence was Nawabzadah Liaqat Ali Khan,[57] who with the Nawab of Chhattari and Nawab Muham-

54. *Vide* Hatim Alavi's article "The Leader I Knew Best" in *Quaid-i-Azam as Seen by His Contemporaries* (compiled by Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad), p. 59.

55. Ibid., p. 60.

56. Safiyah Sultanah Anwar, Ed., *Quaid-i Azam Meri Nazar Men*, p. 190.

57. This is not supported by Choudhry Khaliquzzaman who names Liaqat as one who attended (op. cit., p. 144), but Liaqat kept away from the Provincial Parliamentary Board.

mad Yusuf had disassociated himself from the Muslim League Parliamentary Board because fifty per cent of the seats in the Provincial Board had not been given to the National Agriculturist Party of which they were members and also because of the suspicion that, to use Nawabzadah Liaqat Ali Khan's words, 'this group [Choudhri Khaliquzzaman's party] is regarded with suspicion by the majority of Muslims as having a veiled kinship with the Congress.''[58]

Liaqat did not join the Muslim League Party (in U.P. Assembly) till the beginning of 1938,[59] i.e. long after the Lucknow session of Muslim League (October 1937), at which Fazl-ul-Haq and Sikandar Hayat Khan, the chief ministers of Bengal and Punjab, respectively, had declared that Muslim members of their parties would join the Muslim League.

Perhaps, in fairness to stalwarts like Nawabzadah Liaqat Ali Khan and Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din, it is necessary to point out that in 1936—and in fact till after its assumption of office in 1937 the Congress completely cold-shouldered the Muslim League—the Quaid's political policy had not crystallised on lines which were adopted later. So far he had been keeping very close to the Congress and his obvious desire was to come to a fair settlement with that body and jointly fight the battle of national independence. This is clear from the close harmony which he maintained at that time with Congress leaders in the Central Legislature. The League fought the 1936 elections with an eye on Congress-League coalitions in the provinces. The bitter struggle which later ensued between the Congress and the League should not obscure the fact that, till the middle of 1937, the position was quite different. On 1 March 1936 (i.e. less than two months before the abortive Jinnah-Fazl-i Husain talks) Jinnah declared in a gathering at the Town Hall of Lahore:

"... whatever I have done, let me assure you, *there has been no change in me, not the slightest, since the days when I joined the Indian National Congress*. It might be I have been wrong on some occasions. But it has never been done in a partisan spirit. My sole and only object has been the welfare of my country. I assure

58. M.A.H. Ispahani, op. cit., pp. 18–19.
59. Ibid., p. 19.

you that India's interest is and will be sacred to me and nothing will make me budge an inch from that position."[60]

The sort of reputation which Jinnah enjoyed in the middle of the 'thirties may be seen from the observations of Sir James Grigg, Finance Member of the Government of India from 1934 to early 1939: " . . . Mr. Jinnah was the nationalist from Bombay whose anti-British record was almost as clear as Gandhi's own. . . ."[61] About Jinnah's position at that time Professor Coupland's assessment is similar:

"He had been a sectional rather than a communal leader, a man of the left, the exponent of a forceful anti-British nationalism which had seemed to conservative-minded Muslims to show that he was dangerously 'Congress-minded'."[62]

This opinion may, today, appear overcharged, but, considering its prevalence in responsible British circles, it is not difficult to see why in 1936—especially during the uncertain pre-election days—Muslim leaders in the majority provinces were hesitant about committing themselves to the League. Apparently, Jinnah had to move somewhat to the right and join hands with men like Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan and Sir Nazim-ud-Din before his leadership became broadbased and he could become *the leader* of the Muslim people. Before Mr Muhammad Ali Jinnah could become the *Quaid-i Azam*, he had to move nearer to the path shown by Syed Ahmad Khan.

At any rate, if a veteran Leaguer like Liaqat Ali Khan could not adhere to the Muslim League political party in 1937, it should not be difficult to understand Fazl-i Husain's hesitation in 1936.

Mian Fazl-i Husain's acute controversy during his last months with the founder of Pakistan has cast a shadow on his memory. Even otherwise, the policy followed by him during his last years was severely criticised by Iqbal, his old friend, in a speech delivered in 1935. He accused Fazl-i Husain of accentuating rural-urban

60. *The Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, 3 March 1936, p. 4.

61. J. Grigg, *Prejudice and Judgment*, p. 282.

62. R. Coupland, *Indian Politics, 1936–1942*, p. 183.

differences among Muslims of the province and of supporting "some third-class men" for high offices so that there may be none to challenge his supremacy. Mian Fazl-i Husain's son and biographer has attributed the position regarding leadership to the material at the disposal of his father, but adds, "There is, however, this to be admitted that in spite of the existence of the Unionist Party for over 12 years Fazl-i-Hussain found the party towards the end destitute of first-rate Muslim leaders." [63]

Fazl-i Husain's actions towards the end of his life have obscured his true image. The disastrous attitude which the Unionist Party took up on the very eve of Partition has further estranged public opinion. In making an overall assessment, however, activities of a lifetime have to be taken into consideration, and there is no doubt that during the 'twenties and early 'thirties Fazl-i Husain played a most important and constructive role. If a single man is to be selected as the "maker of the modern Muslim Punjab," perhaps the title would be his. But his work was not confined to the provincial sphere. Beginning with his help in 1924 to revive the Muslim League and demand majority of representation for Muslims in provinces where they were in a majority, the struggle he kept up for safeguarding Muslim separatism at a time when even the future Quaid-i Azam said: "I am a nationalist first, a nationalist second and a nationalist third" (1925) and above all through the efforts he made to safeguard Muslim interests during the crucial years of 1930–35, Fazl-i Husain materially strengthened the basic forces which ultimately led to the establishment of Pakistan. Willingdon is reported to have said that in his opinion only two leaders of Indian Muslims had rendered solid, lasting service to the community and they were Syed Ahmad Khan and Mian Fazl-i Husain.[64] This statement was made before the Quaid-i Azam entered the most fruitful period of his career, and his achievements easily overshadow those of all his contemporaries. Amongst the Muslim men of affairs, Syed Ahmad Khan—the Father of the Modern Muslim India—

63. Azim Hussain, op. cit., p. 318.
64. Abdul Majid Salik, *Sarguzasht* (Urdu), p. 361.

and the Quaid-i Azam—the Father of Pakistan—rise, incomparably, above everybody else. Those who directly took part in the final struggle for Pakistan—i.e. after 1940 or, at any rate, after 1937 (when Fazl-i Husain was dead)—also stand in a class by themselves. Amongst the rest, Mian Fazl-i Husain has as good a claim as anyone else to pre-eminence, on account of his solid, fruitful services to the Muslim cause.

Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan

Fazl-i Husain had done all the necessary spadework for giving the Unionist Party a good start under the new constitution, but he died, and the fruits of his labours were reaped by Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan. He belonged to another old family, but with much more "loyal" traditions than Fazl-i Husain could claim.

Sardar Muhammad Hayat, Sikandar Hayat's Father: His family estate was at Wah, a charming place located between Rawalpindi and Attock, with a beautiful rest-house of Shah Jahan's days. In modern times, the family came into prominence after the First Sikh War (1845–46) when the British had obtained a foothold in the Punjab and were preparing for the final round (which came as the Second Sikh War of 1848–49), while the Sikh chiefs wanted to regain their former power. This conflict led to a poignant tragedy in Sikandar's family. His grandfather, Sardar Karam Khan, actively helped the British, while the latter's brother Sardar Fateh Khan sided with the Sikhs. Their animosity became so acute that Sardar Karam Khan was got assassinated by Fateh Khan.[65] John Nicholson, who was Deputy Commissioner of Rawalpindi and had siezed Attock and the Margalla Pass in the campaign of 1848–49, took steps to protect the interests of the deceased Sardar's family. He ensured the peaceful succession to the family estate by the deceased's small-aged (*bahut khurd sal*[66])

65. *Vide Hayat-i Sikandar* (Urdu), p. 6. Sardar Muhammad Hayat in his *Hayat-i Afghani* is not very explicit, but says that his father's death was due to the treachery of the Sikhs and the "black-heartedness" of Fateh Khan (p. 640).

66. He was then not "more than about seven years old".

son and Sikandar's father, Sardar Muhammad Hayat, took great pains in his education and upbringing, and, according to Sir James Abbot, "lavished much care and attention" on him. This resulted in close personal ties between Nicholson and his protege and in 1857, when the former fell mortally wounded at Delhi, Muhammad Hayat was by his side[67] and with the help of the soldiers of the Punjab Regiment, etc., conveyed the wounded General to a sheltered place. Sardar Muhammad Hayat's services were rewarded by the grant of a family pension. Even before 1857, at Nicholson's request, Edwards had appointed him to the post of "police darogha (superintendent) at Peshawar," but now he rose rapidly. He joined the Punjab Commission in 1862 as Extra Assistant Commissioner. In 1871, he rendered distinguished services, and was rewarded with a C.S.I. and assistant commissionership—the first Indian to get this honour. In 1887, he became Divisional and Sessions Judge, the first Punjabi to receive this appointment. He was also a member of the Punjab Legislative Council for some time.

These details are now only a matter of historical curiosity. What gives Sardar Muhammad Hayat Khan a place in the national history is the fact that he was one of the two principal collaborators of Syed Ahmad Khan in the Punjab and took prominent interest in the welfare of the Muslim community. His place in Aligarh movement (and the difficulty of Syed Ahmad Khan in finding prominent helpers in early days!) may be judged by the fact that he presided over three successive annual sessions of the Mohammadan Educational Conference—held respectively in 1888, 1889 and 1890. (He would have presided over the Educational Conference a fourth time—in 1896—but owing to "a sad event" could not accept the invitation and his place was taken by Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk.) His association with Aligarh movement had started much earlier. The Aligarh College or even School had not yet been established, when soon after the setting up of the Foundation Committee, Sardar Muhammad Hayat

67. According to Sardar Muhammad Hayat, he had been taken to Delhi as a companion (مصاحبوں کے زمرے میں ممتاز فرما کر ہمراہ لیا).

(and Khan Bahadur Barkat Ali Khan) invited Syed Ahmad Khan to the Punjab. Syed Ahmad reached Lahore on 26 December 1873 with ten companions and addressed public meetings on 29 and 30 December 1873. Even before this, Sardar Muhammad Hayat had moved a resolution in support of the proposed college in a meeting of Shiksha Sabha, Lahore, and had written an article with the same object in *Koh-i Noor*, Lahore, of 4 October 1873. Eleven years later when Syed Ahmad Khan visited Punjab again (in 1884), Sardar Muhammad Hayat made elaborate arrangements for welcoming him at Gurdaspur, where he was posted as a judge. An interesting function, arranged through the efforts of Sikandar's mother during this visit, was the presentation of an address and a purse to Syed Ahmad Khan on behalf of the local ladies. The address was read by Sardar Muhammad Hayat, and in reply Syed Ahmad elaborated, for the first[68] time, his views regarding women's education, which came as a surprise to many and were considered ultra-conservative even by Hali.

According to *Hayat-i Sikandar*, it was Sardar Muhammad Hayat who drew the attention of Thorburn, the author of *Musalmans and the Moneylenders*, to the sufferings of the rural Muslim debtors at the hands of Hindu moneylenders, and, after various inquiries, this led to the passing of the Land Alienation Act in 1900. It has not been possible to verify the statement made in *Hayat-i Sikandar*. It may not be wholly correct,[69]

68. *Syed Ahmad Khan Ka Safar Namah-i Punjab*, p. 104.

69. Thorburn must have met Muhammad Hayat Khan early (at least by 1870). Both had long spells of service in Bannu. Muhammad Hayat collected material for *Hayat-i Afghani* at Bannu where he was posted as E.A.C. He began his book in 1862. Thorburn's first book was *Bannu or Our Afghan Frontier*, which he wrote as Settlement Officer. In his book he mentions Muhammad Hayat (p. 92) and *Hayat-i Afghani* (pp. 19–20). Thorburn had advocated remedial measures to protect the peasantry and remove the cause for disaffection, when he was posted at Dera Ismail Khan in 1884. These proposals were turned down by the Government of India. Thereupon he took the fight to the English people and published his *Musalmans and the Moneylenders in the Punjab* in 1886. This book came to the notice af Lord Cross, the Secretary of State, who initiated a fresh inquiry. Even now majority of senior officers favoured a policy of *laissez-faire*, but thanks to

but it is certain that when the Land Alienation Bill was on the anvil, Sardar Muhammad Hayat Khan played an important part in supporting it in the teeth of powerful opposition. When the draft bill was before the Select Committee, it was vehemently opposed by Sir Harnam Singh and it was known that Sir Mackworth Young, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, was also opposed to the bill. Here Sardar Muhammad Hayat's intervention was useful. "The retired district judge and large land-owner strongly supported the bill. Being a Muslim and an officer with personal experience in the problems of land alienation and agrarian debt Muhammad Hayat Khan was able to convince the Committee that he, rather than Harnam Singh, represented faithfully the viewpoint of the Punjabi peasant. With this added assurance that Punjabi cultivators favoured the legislation, the Committee overrode Harnam Singh's objections and closed the hearings."[70] The battle was now carried to the floor of the Legislative Council, where Mackworth Young was present to encourage and support Harnam Singh, but Sardar Hayat Khan steadily opposed him. He tried to discredit Harnam Singh by saying that he was a member of the aristocracy—Harnam Singh was heir apparent of Kapurthala until he became a Christian—and not in touch with "the real population". Harnam Singh moved four amendments to water down the provisions of the bill, but they were successfully opposed by Hayat Khan. "In opposing each amendment Muhammad Hayat Khan played heavily upon his personal experience as judge and land-owner."[71]

Sardar Muhammad Hayat was also an author. From 1862 to 1865 he worked on collection of material on the history of Afghan areas and tribes, which was incorporated in his *Hayat-i Afghani*. It is a large-sized book of 696 pages, which was completed in

Curzon's support, Land Alienation Bill was taken up and became law in 1900. By then Thorburn had retired from the Indian Civil Service. According to Barrier, "Thorburn ruined his career with a zealous defense of the Muslim peasantry and tactless attacks on the Punjab administrative system" (Nurman G. Barrier, *The Punjab Alienation of Land Bill of 1900*, p. 20, footnote).

70. Barrier, op. cit., pp. 72–73.

71. Ibid., p. 77.

September 1865 and published in 1867. It is a mine of information regarding the history and habits of the tribes on the frontier and must be one of the earliest historical works published in Urdu in the Punjab. Sardar Muhammad Hayat Khan passed away in 1901.

Sikandar Hayat Khan was born in 1892 at Multan in what is now the Commissioner's House and was the residence of the Divisional Judge in those days. His mother was the daughter of Mian Ghulam Jilani, the chief minister of Kapurthala. Soon after his father's death he was sent to Aligarh where he joined the Mohammadan Anglo-Oriental Collegiate High School, and later went to England for higher education. Some trouble arose during his stay in England and he returned in July 1910 without a degree. During the First World War Sikandar rose to be a Captain and got an M.B.E., but he was also interested in commerce and industry and was Director or Managing Director of a number of industrial concerns. In 1921, he was elected to the provincial legislature, but his election was set aside and he had to wait till 1924 before he could enter the Legislative Assembly. His first important assignment came in 1928 when he headed the Punjab Reforms Committee set up by the provincial Legislative Council to work in collaboration with the Simon Commission. After that his rise was very rapid. In 1929, he became the Revenue Member of the Government of the Punjab and acted as Governor in 1932. In 1936 he was elected leader of the Unionist Party after the death of Fazl-i Husain.

Sikandar Hayat was personally mild and courteous, and not only was he backed by the British officials, but was an old personal friend of Raja Narendranath, the leader of the Hindu party in the Punjab Assembly. In the elections of 1936, the Unionists won 96 out of 175 seats, thus gaining a clear majority in the Assembly, but Sikandar formed a coalition cabinet with three Muslims, two Hindus and one Sikh. He left the choice of non-Muslim representatives to the non-Muslim members and did not attempt to impose on them persons of his or his party's choice as was, later, attempted in the Congress provinces in respect of Muslim ministers. At the elections the Unionist Party

had opposed the Muslim League, but when, after assumption of office, the Congress refused to take true Muslim representatives into cabinets and there was great bitterness amongst Muslims all over the country, Sikandar joined hands with the Quaid-i Azam. The Punjab Premier and the Quaid came to a compromise and at the Lucknow session of the All-India Muslim League, the former announced that he was advising all the Muslim members of the Unionist Party in the Punjab to join the League. This was the shining hour of Sikandar's political career. His example was followed by Fazl-ul-Haq of Bengal, and a new life was infused into the Muslim League. Choudhry Khaliquzzaman, commenting on Sikandar's action, says:

"No one can deny that without this action on the part of Sikandar the Muslim League fight would have been confined to minority provinces alone and sooner or later they would have had to go under. Sikandar saved Muslim India by coming to the League session in Lucknow and by infusing life into the organization. His association with the Muslim League at this crucial hour in the fate of Muslim India is an event in history and must live for ever to remind us of his greatness."[72]

M.A.H. Ispahani in his book, *Quaid-e-Azam As I Knew Him*, has taken a completely different view of Sikandar's action. According to him, Sikandar Hayat "with his Unionist followers, joined the Muslim League not out of deep conviction but merely as a matter of necessity. . . . As an astute politician Sikandar realized the potential danger to his Ministry. He knew that the Unionist Ministry by itself could not withstand the tide of Congress totalitarianism unless he secured the support of a Muslim organization functioning on an all-India plane." There is no doubt that Sikandar was "an astute politician" and it may be presumed that he would not readily take steps which would endanger his own position or that of the Unionist Party of which he was the leader. There seems, however, no basis for the view that in October 1937 "the tide of Congress totalitarianism" posed a threat to the Unionist Ministry in the Punjab. The elections

72. Choudhry Khaliquzzaman, op. cit., p. 290.

had been fought only a year earlier, and the poor show of the Congress in the Punjab indicated the size of the threat from that direction. Indeed, by joining the Muslim League (and securing *one* additional vote in the Assembly!) the Unionists ran a greater and more immediate risk of alienating a large block of Hindu supporters. Sikandar adroitly avoided this, but, on the basis of the data available, it is difficult to endorse Ispahani's thesis. For one thing, efforts for the League-Unionist *rapproachement* had started long before the Muslim Mass Contact Movement or even the Congress success at the elections. In *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah*, published by the Quaid, there is a letter written on 25 June 1936 (pp. 9-10) indicating Sikandar's plans to see the Quaid in Bombay, and containing the basic compromise formula which, after elaboration and amendment, was adopted at Lucknow in October 1937. There is another letter dated 23 August 1936 on the same subject (p. 10). In *Eye Witnesses of History* also there is a letter dated 2 August 1936 from Mian Ahmad Yar Khan Daultana in which he writes to the Quaid: "I am writing to Sir Sikandar to have a talk with you and try to come to a working settlement." Ahmad Yar Khan became the Chief Parliamentary Secretary in the new Unionist Ministry in April 1937. Early next month, he issued an important public statement in which it was emphasised that all Muslims of the Punjab, whether Unionist or non-Unionist, were with Mr Jinnah in all-India matters, and the only difference was owing to the Unionist reluctance to disband a useful, non-communal party.[73] Syed Nur Ahmad—whose hero, incidentally, was Mian Fazl-i Husain and not Sikandar—also gives details about the efforts of Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan and Nawab Shah Nawaz of Mamdot to bring about this settlement. What he writes also explains why Sikandar-Jinnah agreement came only after a break between the League and the Congress. Giving reasons for Sikandar's earlier hesitation, he says: "Hitherto, it was not clear what shape the efforts for the League-Congress understanding would take. If there was an understanding what would be its terms? Would the Unionist Party in the Punjab be able to abide

73. *The Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, 7 May 1937 (as cited by Dr Ashiq Husain Batalvi, op. cit., p. 477).

by them?[74] The League-Congress *rapprochement*,[75] if it had come, would have not only affected the position of the Hindu Unionists like Sir Chhotu Ram, but—what was more important in the peculiar conditions of the Punjab—it would have also influenced the attitude of the Governor and the British bureaucracy towards the Unionist Party, if it had been allied with the League. The break between the League and the Congress simplified the position. It was now possible for the Muslim Unionists to join the League without alienating the Governor and the bureaucrats.

Whatever may have been the factors which motivated Sikandar in October 1937, those who were close to the League High Command at that time took a view different from that of Ispahani of the action taken by Sikandar. In 1942, Noman's history of the Muslim struggle appeared under the title of *Muslim India*. He was the chief worker of the All-India Muslim Students' Federation. In preparation of his book he "received great help and encouragement from Mr. M.A. Jinnah. His files and other material were my [Noman's] guide" (p. 10). Noman has also thanked Nawabzadah Liaqat Ali Khan "for placing the record kept in the Central Office of the League" at his disposal. In this semi-official account of the Muslim struggle (written in 1942), the following entry appears regarding the announcement made at Lucknow:

"The announcement was hailed as a triumph of Mr. Jinnah's sagacity and Sikandar Hayat's statesmanship, for though actually he was not in need of Muslim League's support for the stability of his Ministry, yet his decision to join the League was a recognition of the necessity of an All-India Muslim Party in the interest of the Muslim community[76] as a whole which could support the Mussalmans in provinces where they are in a hopeless

74. Syed Nur Ahmad, *Martial Law Say Martial Law Tak*, p. 188.

75. After analysing League's election manifesto and understanding its close similarity with the Congress manifesto, Professor Coupland infers that Jinnah wanted to revive the League-Congress concord of 1916 (R. Coupland, *India : A Re-statement*).

76. At the Special Session of the Muslim League held at Calcutta in April 1938, Sikandar himself gave the same reasons—to meet "the challenge to the Muslims of India"—for the steps taken by him at Lucknow. (For details, see *Indian Annual Register*, 1938, I, 386.) The Quaid-i Azam was in the chair, when Sikandar made his speech at Calcutta.

minority" (p. 352).

The arrangements at Lucknow were in the nature of a compromise or a half-way house and were intended to safeguard the interests of both the Muslim League and the Unionist Party. It is also true that when the Muslim League gradually gained strength and, not only tightened its discipline, but also adopted new political objectives which were not easy to reconcile with those of the Unionist Party, the position of Sikandar became increasingly uncomfortable. In this situation, especially when trying to defend the Unionist Party before his critics in the Punjab —e.g. in a speech in the Punjab Assembly on 11 March 1941—he expressed views which (though accepted by Malik Barkat Ali as exposition of the Lahore Resolution!) did not fully accord with the Muslim League point of view. The Punjab Premier was trying "to sail in two boats"—the arrangements at Lucknow were calculated to facilitate that—but it is worth noting that on occasions when choice became inevitable—e.g. when on 11 September 1941 (i.e. long after his speech of 11 March 1941) the Quaid-i Azam decided that Muslim members of National Defence Council should resign—Sikandar faithfully carried out the League mandate. In fact, not only did he promptly resign from the National Defence Council, but also undertook to persuade A.K. Fazl-ul-Haq to do the same. As Dr Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi remarks, this "showed that the Punjab Ministry, though not a Muslim League government, was not prepared to quarrel with the League".[77] This sentence sums up, in a nutshell, the position of Sikandar's ministry—in fact, the limitations as well as utility of Sikandar's policy and personality.

This, however, is later history. So far as the League Session of 1937 was concerned, another scholar writes:

"But at Lucknow it looked as if Jinnah had snatched victory from the jaws of defeat. On the day he appealed to the Muslims to get organised for politics means power and not relying only on cries of justice or fairplay or goodwill, Sikandar Hayat Khan, Premier of the Punjab, Fazl-ul-Haq, Premier of Bengal, and Sir Muhammad Saad Ullah Khan, Premier of Assam, declared in the

77. Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, op. cit., p. 175.

League session that they were advising the Muslim members of their respective political parties to join the Muslim League. *No better tonic could have invigorated the Muslim League than those declarations.*"[78]

Ispahani is not the only critic of Sikandar Hayat Khan. One of the earliest was the communist leader Sajjad Zaheer, whose booklet *Light on League-Unionist Conflict* contains useful material regarding the affairs in the Punjab. The most violent criticism of Sikandar came from a group which had formed itself into the reorganised Punjab Provincial Muslim League, soon after the breakdown of Jinnah-Fazl-i Husain talks. This organisation was later refused affiliation on technical grounds by the All-India Muslim League, but it had the powerful support of Iqbal and had done useful work after it was set up in June 1936. Its point of view is expressed in Iqbal's strongly-worded letter of 10 November 1937, which Ispahani quotes at length, and more fully in Dr Ashiq Husain Balalvi's book, *Iqbal Kay Akhri Do Sal*. It is, however, noteworthy that in this controversy between Sikandar and the group claiming Iqbal's support, the Quaid-i Azam did not endorse Iqbal's point of view. As Dr Batalvi mournfully points out at the end of his *Iqbal Kay Akhri Do Sal*, when the All-India Muslim League Council met at Calcutta on 18–19 April 1938 (i.e. two-three days before the death of Iqbal) twenty-five out of thirty-five seats on the Organising Committee set up for the League work in the Punjab were given to Sikandar's nominees and only ten to the group which had Iqbal's backing. This was not the only indication of the Quaid viewing the situation in the Punjab differently from Iqbal. As Batalvi relates, "In June 1936, when the session of All-India Muslim League Central Parliamentary Board met at Lahore and the Unionist Party was in open conflict with the League, Iqbal asked Mr Jinnah to expel from the [Muslim] League Council those Muslim members of the Unionist Party who were also members of the All-India Muslim League Council, but for certain reasons Mr Jinnah did not consider it appropriate to take penal action against those rebel members."[79]

78. Khalid bin Sayeed, *Pakistan : The Formative Phase*, pp. 97–98.
79. Batalvi, op. cit., p. 483.

When the annual session of the League was held at Lucknow in October 1937, Iqbal reiterated his views, saying that the members of the Unionist Party numbering twenty-eight had "no right to remain in the League Council and in their place twenty-eight sincere persons should be nominated. Doctor Sahib [Iqbal] himself prepared the list of twenty-eight persons and gave it to Ghulam Rasul Khan, but the twenty-eight members of the Unionist Party continued in the League Council." [80] The climax came when the All-India Muslim League Council, in its meeting held on 3 April 1938, refused to accept the affiliation of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, although Iqbal was still[81] associated with the organisation.

The differences between Iqbal and the Quaid were not merely of approach towards the League organisation in the Punjab. They were more general and even fundamental—of temperament and basic philosophy of life. They both were supermen in their own spheres and, compelled by a common desire to serve their people, they worked together for a limited but crucial period of national history, but their *main* spheres of activity were so different that they needed different kinds of equipment. Iqbal was a great thinker and seer, but he was primarily or at least simultaneously a great poet. The result was that he saw events with a poet's intensity of feelings. He was normally cool-headed and clear-eyed, but at times his feelings overlay his thought. In his philosophy of life *ishq*—(a positive) emotion—emerges as the cardinal virtue and *aql* is repeatedly held up to ridicule. The Quaid, on the other hand, prided on being "a cold-blooded logician". He also had pondered long and hard over issues confronting his people and had a well-considered philosophy of his own, but his primary role was that of a political leader, and in this—as in other spheres—*aql* was his guiding star.

For example, Iqbal strongly felt on the question of Palestine —like most Muslims in India. His feelings were so strong that at a time when the Congress was at the peak of its power and before

80. Ibid., p. 484.
81. *Vide* Malik Barkat Ali's letter to the Quaid, quoted in ibid., p. 634.

the Muslim League had shown any sign of new life, Iqbal suggested—on the eve of the League session at Lucknow—that not only should the League "pass a strong resolution on this question" but also "decide on some sort of positive action in which masses may share in large numbers". He was obviously thinking of a Civil Disobedience campaign as he added, "Personally I would not mind going to jail on an issue which affects both Islam and India."[82] Similar was the attitude of Iqbal and his group towards the Shaheed Ganj issue. They wanted the Special Session of the League to be held at Lahore, as the Muslims of the Punjab felt very strongly on the issue and it was desirable that the League session should be held in the midst of the people who would have to bear the brunt of a mass movement, in case the League decided on civil disobedience.[83]

The Quaid, also, was unhappy on these two issues, but he saw more clearly than Iqbal that at a time when the Muslim India was entering a life-and-death struggle with the Congress on the outcome of which would depend its future for centuries, it was wrong to divert its attention to issues which, however popular, were not so basic as the main problem confronting the Indian Muslims. Accordingly a strong resolution on Palestine was passed, but no action involving participation of the masses was decided upon. Similarly, the special session on Shaheed Ganj was held but not at Lahore. It was held at Calcutta and, although the Muslim opinion on the question was strongly voiced, only constitutional course of action was approved.

Perhaps, these two instances did not simply involve a question of judgment. They also illustrate the Quaid's basic integrity and courage. Action with regard to the Palestine question had been suggested as it was "very much agitating the minds of the Muslims" and provided "a very fine opportunity for mass contact for the purposes of the League". The Shaheed Ganj issue had a similar mass appeal. The Quaid could not be unaware of all this,

82. *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah*, p. 26.

83. *Vide* letter dated 17 February 1938 from Ghulam Rasul (for Dr Sir Muhammad Iqbal) addressed to the Quaid, quoted by Batalvi, op. cit., p. 609.

but seeing as he did that starting mass agitation on these questions, although popular, would divert attention from the great issue of the day and would harm the long-term Muslim interests, he refused to encourage this step although it had been advocated with the best of intentions, and he himself felt strongly on these questions.

Dr Batalvi has attributed the holding of the League Council session at Calcutta rather than at Lahore to a letter improperly written by Sir Shah Nawaz of Mamdot. Similarly, he has attributed the rejection of the affiliation of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and other unfavourable steps to the influence of Nawabzadah Liaqat Ali Khan. These insinuations, apart from being uncharitable to veteran League leaders like Liaqat, rest on the presumption that the Quaid could be led by others, and did not exercise his own judgment. Nobody who has made any attempt to understand the Quaid's character can possibly endorse this.

The differences between the League High Command and Iqbal's group are capable of a fairer and more charitable explanation. To some extent, they must have resulted from a difference in perspective—the central leadership looking at the issues from an all-India angle, while Iqbal and his companions found local problems more pressing. The League leaders may also have formed a rather poor opinion of the performance—and capabilities—of the Lahore group and might have considered it unsafe to put all eggs in their small basket. But largely, it seems to have been a question of approach. Iqbal and his young friends wanted quick results and immediate elimination of what they found irksome. The Quaid, on the other hand, had the priceless gift of patience, so essential to a constructive statesman. This comes out very clearly in Hasan Ispahani's book. Time and again, Ispahani would get impatient about something and suggest precipitate action. The Quaid, "as was his wont," [84] advised him to be patient and invariably the results would justify the Quaid's approach.

84. M.A.H. Ispahani, op. cit., p. 151.

As an illustration of the Quaid's mature and statesmanlike attitude, it may be useful to reproduce what he wrote to Ispahani when he complained against certain developments [85] in Bengal in the spring of 1937. The Quaid wrote:

"You cannot expect everything to go on on the footing of a highly developed standard of public life, as these are only the beginnings that are being made. You must not mix up the aims we have with the achievements. The aims are not achieved immediately they are laid down. Bengal has done well and we must be thankful for small mercies. As you go on, of course, with patience and tact, things are bound to develop more and more in accordance with our ideals and aims."

Ispahani adds: "As later events showed, Mr. Jinnah's approach to the question was right." [86]

The Quaid was trying to bring about something similar in the Punjab. In a way, he had hinted at this. In his beautiful Foreword to *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah*, in which he paid a high tribute to "the sage, philosopher and national poet of Islam, the late Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal," he referred to Iqbal's "doubts about Sikandar-Jinnah Pact" and his anxiety "to see it translated into some tangible results *without delay*" (italics ours). The Quaid, apparently, felt that some delay or period of patient, hard work was necessary. At any rate, he seems to have been fully satisfied that the policy followed by him in the Punjab had been successful. He wrote his Foreword in 1942 or 1943. After referring to Iqbal's doubts regarding Sikandar-Jinnah Pact, he went on to say:

"But unfortunately he [Iqbal] has not lived to see that Punjab has all round made a remarkable progress and now it is beyond doubt that Muslims stand solidly behind the Muslim League Organization." [87]

If different attitudes towards the so-called Sikandar-Jinnah Pact are carefully examined, the differences appear to represent

85. Ispahani refers to the "outlook" of "office-seekers," but does not clearly say what his complaint was. Did he object to the formation of the Coalition Government which assumed office at this time and in five years transformed the Muslim position in Bengal?

86. M.A.H. Ispahani, op. cit.

87. *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah*, pp. 3–4.

not so much a clash of personalities as the usual differences between the left and the right wings of a party, or between the radicalism of the youth and the cautious conservatism of the old age. Perhaps, the earliest, systematic criticism of the arrangements at Lucknow was published by Sajjad Zaheer, the well-known communist writer, who in his pamphlet *Light on League-Unionist Conflict* criticised the Pact and put forward the view (p. 19) that "the whole arrangement, in practice and actual fact, worked entirely to the advantage of the Unionists and to the detriment of the League". Sajjad Zaheer was not a Leaguer, but even Dr Ashiq Husain Batalvi, who is often accepted as the spokesman of the Muslim League, does not seem to represent the "middle of the road" group in that organisation or at least the viewpoint of what came to be called the League High Command. Apart from his personal squabbles[88] with Sikandar, some of which found expression in acrimonious debates in the Muslim League Council meetings, he himself states that he formed a Muslim League Radical Party and was in correspondence with Dr Muhammad Ashraf, the Office Secretary of the All-India National Congress

88. *Vide* Ashiq Husain Batalvi, op. cit., p. 641, and his article in Safiyah Sultanah, Ed., op. cit., pp. 48, ff. In fact, Batalvi alleges that taking advantage of his correspondence with Dr Ashraf (which was being censored) Sikandar got two letters fabricated through a government officer. These letters indicated that "for running the Muslim League Radical Party and for carrying on propaganda against Sir Sikandar, I [Ashiq Husain Batalvi] was receiving financial help from the Congress" (*vide* Batalvi's article in Safiyah Sultanah, Ed., op. cit., p. 63). After this, there could be no love lost between Sikandar and Batalvi, but it is intriguing that when he wrote to the Quaid against Sikandar's hostile actions after the former had started the Muslim League Radical Party, he received no reply (ibid., p. 62). Later, when he personally saw the Quaid, he was asked to send all the letters he had received from Dr Ashraf, and, apparently, even then no action was taken (ibid., pp. 63-64). Presumably this was the beginning of coolness between the Quaid and Batalvi as they did not see each other for the next four years (ibid., p. 52). The last two meetings were brief and incidental, and in the final meeting in 1947 the Quaid was particularly discouraging (ibid., p. 53). [Does the Quaid's later behaviour explain Batalvi's frequent reference to him merely as Jinnah or Mr Jinnah (and not as the Quaid-i Azam) in his Iqbal lectures delivered in the Senate Hall, Lahore, in 1967, in spite of the protests of the audience ?]

Committee, and later a prominent communist leader.

Batalvi's formation of Muslim League Radical Party, and his contacts with Dr Ashraf make it clear that Batalvi belonged to the Radical Section of the Muslim League. Hasan Ispahani, was, apparently, not associated with Batalvi's Muslim League Radical Party, but his book brings out his youthful, even radical, point of view.[89] In August 1942, when the Congress launched the "Quit India" movement, he was one of those who "held the firm view that this was an opportunity for us to join hands with the Congress."[90] He and his friends pressed this view before the Quaid-i Azam who did not agree and favoured a cautious and neutral position. The Working Committee of the Muslim League, where the question was discussed, quickly came round to the Quaid's point of view. Even then, the utmost that Ispahani and his friends would agree to was to abstain from voting,

"but on the clear understanding with Mr. Jinnah that if things did not work out within three months as [he] had forecast, they would, with much pain and regret, have to leave the [Working] Committee [of the Muslism League]." [91]

Both Batalvi and Ispahani cite Iqbal's strongly-worded letter of 10 November 1937 to the Quaid—written, it appears, essentially to strengthen the case of a colleague (Ghulam Rasul), who had "done so much for" their common institution—but, as Batalvi points out, Iqbal in his last two years was a changed man.[92] In fact, he says, "the remarkable thing is that in the proportion in which his [Iqbal's] illness increased, in the same proportion he became extremist in politics" (p. 553). Iqbal's involvement in the affairs of the Punjab was direct, and, in any case, with a poet's

89. In the second edition of his book, Ispahani has made it clear that his own organisation—the New Muslim Majlis—"belonged to the progressive group" and has criticised the so-called "conservatives" (p. 151).

90. M.A.H. Ispahani, op. cit., p. 66.

91. Ibid., p. 67.

92. Batalvi, op. cit., pp. 532-34. The publication of this *draft* statement in Batalvi's book was in order, but the same cannot be said about its inclusion as "Press Statement" in a publication of Iqbal Academy. Even more controversial is Academy's publication of Ghulam Rasul's letter dated 8 November 1937 "for Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal," which the Quaid, rightly, refused to consider as Iqbal's letter.

fervour, he reacted more emotionally to the situation than the cool-headed Quaid. Nevertheless, Batalvi's implied criticism of the Quaid (e.g. his observation "that the step which Mr Jinnah took in 1944, after six years' delay, was the same which Iqbal had [proposed to be] taken in 1938 with full courage and daring") cannot be endorsed. Batalvi's comment is with regard to an unpublished statement of Iqbal drafted in February 1938. Considering that Iqbal accepted the Quaid's advice and suppressed the statement robs it of any practical importance, but even if it is taken at its face value, Batalvi's views cannot be accepted without injustice to the Quaid. Iqbal and the Quaid were both giants in their own spheres and were our greatest benefactors, but the suggestion that the Quaid possessed less "courage and daring" than Iqbal is simply not true. The Quaid waited till 1944 for a showdown with the Unionists, not because he was lacking in courage, but because he was a realist and a more practical politician than Iqbal, the great poet. In fact, nothing brings out more clearly the cool wisdom, sound judgment and superb qualities of constructive leadership possessed by the Quaid-i Azam than his handling of the affairs in the Punjab. In 1937 and 1938, he took—or countenanced—steps at variance with Iqbal's (or at any rate a group's[93]) views, because there were good reasons for doing so. It is not possible to deal fully with the subject here, but it may be pointed out that even Sajjad Zaheer admits that the Muslim League derived several benefits from the arrangements at Lucknow. "The Unionist Ministry," he says, "was tolerated by the Muslim League, so that it might be used as a pawn on the chessboard of Indian politics."[94] Sajjad Zaheer is highly critical

93. The correct position can be determined with certainty only after the availability of the Quaid's papers, but apparently he was not very happy about the group's reaction to Sikandar-Jinnah Pact and their demands on their own behalf. The present writer has seen with Mian Muhammad Shafi (Meem Sheen) a two-page letter of Quaid addressed to Malik Barkat Ali on 19 November 1937, and sharply objecting to any distinction being made between the old Leaguers and the new Leaguers. The Quaid even objected—in the course of this letter—to his name being shown as patron on the front page of the group's paper—*The New Times*—which was then being edited by Mian Muhammad Shafi.

94. Sajjad Zaheer, *Light on League-Unionist Conflict*, p. 21.

of the step taken at Lucknow, and calls it "a wrong policy," but is fair enough to outline the other factors responsible for its adoption. Apart from its advantages in all-India sphere, this policy "was adopted because the League was weak in 1937; it had still to become the mass organisation which it became six years later . . . because the League had become much stronger in 1944, it was possible for it and its leader to demand from the Unionists that they submit to the discipline and carry out the policy of the [Muslim League] Party to which they claimed to belong."[95]

Batalvi, who was probably the most youthful member in Iqbal's or, rather, Barkat Ali's group of Muslim Leaguers, does not properly appreciate the forceful considerations which weighed with the Quaid in not endorsing Iqbal's attitude towards the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact, but the information which he incidentally gives, in his brilliantly written book, about the position in the Punjab fully bears out the wisdom of the Quaid's approach. Iqbal had promised full support to the Quaid after the breakdown of his talks with Mian Fazl-i Husain. On 9 May, he issued a statement in support of the Muslim League, and soon started energetic action in support of the organisation. Yet, what was the result? When in June, the President of the All-India Muslim League arrived to preside over the Parliamentary Board, there were only eight or ten persons to meet him at the railway station. This did not escape the keen-eyed leader, who remarked on arrival: "The strength of your organisation can be easily judged by the fact that only eight or ten of you are here."[96] The reception was better a few months later when special steps were taken, but even then the public meeting held outside Delhi Gate for the inauguration of the election campaign by the Quaid was "brief and poorly attended."[97] The basic position of the organisation deteriorated further when the election fever died down. The League had just Rs 1000 to run the organisation, provided to Iqbal by some unnamed individual (Sir Shah Nawaz of Mamdot?[98]). When

95. Ibid., pp. 27-28.

96. *Vide* Batalvi's article in Safiyah Sultanah, Ed., op. cit., p. 46.

97. Batalvi, op. cit., p. 352.

98. "Nawab Sahib secretly sent some money (*naqd narain*) to Hazrat Allama [Iqbal] to start the election campaign of the Punjab Muslim League" [Meem Sheen in *Nawa-i Waqt*, 25 December 1963].

these limited funds were exhausted, the sole office clerk had to be retrenched. The office of the League had to be closed and the record shifted to the residence of the Secretary. The response to the efforts made by Iqbal and his companions to raise funds, as described by Batalvi, casts a lurid light on the situation in the Punjab, but it also brings out the measure of their "success". Iqbal sent his leading co-workers to see Sardar Muhammad Nawaz Khan, a public-spirited landlord of Kot Fateh Khan. Accordingly, Malik Barkat Ali and Raja Ghulam Rasul Khan saw Sardar Nawaz. The first question which he asked the visitors was about their relations with Sikandar Hayat Khan. When the true position was explained to him, he frankly pointed out his difficulties in helping them. He suggested a way out, but this was not acceptable to the deputationists, and they returned empty-handed. Same was the result of the visits to Sargodha and Montgomery. The only redeeming feature was the promise given by the ancient Gilani family of Multan to stand by the League, in the event of a showdown, but one swallow does not make a summer. The miserable show of the League in the Punjab elections had already exposed its position in the province. Only two of its candidates were elected, and, out of these, one crossed the floor to join the Unionists. Can, under these circumstances, the Quaid be accused of want of courage, if he refused to put all eggs in the basket provided by the enthusiasts of Lahore and force an immediate showdown with the Unionist Party?

The arrangements at Lucknow were in the nature of a compromise, and involved advantages as well as disadvantages to both parties. It was not a one-sided affair, but judging by hindsight and dispassionately, the greater beneficiary seems to have been the Muslim League. It gained the prestige of being associated with the ruling group in an area where power was (and is!) worshipped. Extensive contacts were established between the League leadership and the landed aristocracy which dominated the Punjab politics at that time and ultimately the League found powerful recruits even in the leading Unionist families, like Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan (son of Sikandar), Nawab of Mamdot (son of Sir Shah Nawaz of Mamdot) and Mian Mumtaz Daultana

(son of Nawab Ahmad Yar Khan Daultana). Ultimately, the League leader was able to have a successful showdown[99] with the Unionists. It is not without reason that Sikandar is not popular amongst the Unionist diehards, who consider Sikandar-Jinnah Pact to have been "the beginning of the end"!

The fact that we share Choudhry Khaliquzzaman's opinion rather than that of Hasan Ispahani or Ashiq Husain Batalvi regarding Sikandar Hayat Khan does not mean that there is nothing to criticise in Sikandar's actions or policies. He had two or three obvious and serious shortcomings. He was admittedly trying to "sail in two boats". As his local critics rightly pointed out, he was an eloquent and enthusiastic speaker on the platform of the All-India Muslim League, but within the province he was the head of the Unionist Party and a vigilant guardian of its interests. This clearly meant that his support to the League was not

99. Curiously enough, Batalvi is not appreciative of the Quaid's forcing the issue when he did! Of Quaid's conflict with Khizr Hayat Khan, he says, "The plain truth is that on *both sides* there was *obstinacy*" [italics ours] (p. 482). Amongst the League leaders Batalvi's *bete noire* was Liaqat, but, apparently, he is not a wholehearted admirer of the Quaid either. He left the Muslim League before very long, and in 1946 we see him crossing swords with Hameed Nizami over the Muslim League policy, and criticising the new Muslim League leaders in the Punjab (the young Nawab of Mamdot and Mumtaz Daultana). His active association with the Muslim League coincided with the period described in *Iqbal Kay Akhri Do Sal* (i.e. 1936 to 1938). His interview with the Quaid on 25 December 1938 was markedly unpleasant. The Quaid said with regard to a member of Batalvi's group: "Ghulam Rasul Khan is an obstinate person." To this Batalvi replied: "If a person does not give up his principles and stands firm on his position, you call him 'obstinate'." On this, Batalvi narrates, "he [the Quaid] was somewhat hurt and a scowl appeared on his forehead" (یہ سن کر کسی قدر کبیدہ خاطر ہوئے اور پیشانی پر بل آ گیا). He said to Batalvi: "Have you anything else to say? If so, do so." Batalvi produced the copy of a letter claiming parity of representation with the Sikandar group. The Quaid suggested that Malik Barkat Ali, who was a member of the Working Committee, should raise the question before the Committee, which would decide the issue. (This was done by Barkat Ali, but he was unable to get his demand accepted.) Even Batalvi's version of the interview, which we have taken from his book *Hamari Qaumi Jidd-o-Jahad* (1938), p. 283, would show how different his point of view was from that of the Quaid.

wholehearted. To maintain this quality of approach he, at times, made ambiguous and even conflicting statements, which caused misunderstanding and gave a handle to his critics.

What was equally harmful was his softness in dealing with the British bureaucrats. It is true that the position in the Punjab—with almost an equal strength of the Muslims and the non-Muslims in the Assembly and the readiness of other prominent Unionists (and non-Unionists!) to turn against the Premier at the behest of the Governor—was such that no Premier could survive without the goodwill of the Governor and the European bureaucrats. It is also true that after Sikandar had built up his strength, he asserted himself more vigorously than is generally recognised,[100] but by and large the position in the Punjab under Provincial Autonomy was completely different from what it was in the Congress provinces and what it would have been under a man like Fazl-i Husain.

These were serious weaknesses, but while Sikandar was basically a loyalist, there was another facet of his personality. This was his attachment to Islam and interest in the welfare of the Indian Muslims. He was known to be a devout Muslim, who rarely missed a *namaz* or a *roza*. It is doubtful whether he would have taken the far-reaching steps which he took for the renovation of the Badshahi Masjid, involving fresh taxation, unless he had felt a powerful urge to do so. His interest in Muslim India can also be traced to his personal and family history. He had spent his early formative years at Aligarh[101]—probably the only Unionist leader with that experience—and had made a number of lifelong friends there. He sent his sons and daughters for education to Aligarh. His father was a prominent co-worker of Syed Ahmad Khan and it would be quite natural for him to acquire an interest in the welfare of the Indian Muslims. He was a loyalist—like his father—but his Aligarh background was also an important factor in his personality. He found it hard to

100. E.g. on selection of Thal in preference to Bhakra scheme (favoured by Chhotu Ram), on the representation of the Punjab in Viceroy's Executive Council.

101. He studied in the Collegiate School at Aligarh.

ignore the Muslim opinion or be indifferent to the Muslim interests. When he resigned from the National Defence Council, many people in the Punjab were puzzled. One of them solemnly told the present writer that he asked Sikandar for the reason and his reply was: "When I die, my *Janazah* will have to be carried on the shoulders of the Muslims. I cannot possibly give them up."

During the last year or so of Sikandar's life his relations with the Quaid were not at their best. On some points there were real differences, e.g. in approach towards the war effort. As Batalvi says, the question of war effort was "a very big cause of the bitterness and misunderstanding which arose between the Muslim League and the Punjab Premier Sikandar Hayat Khan".[102] On this question Sikandar held strong and decided views. Apart from the fact that soldiering had traditionally been a source of substantial income and other advantages to the Punjab, he felt that this position was a great source of strength to the Muslims in all-India affairs. When in December 1938, Z.H. Lari brought a resolution before the meeting of the League Council to criticise Sikandar, the latter made a fighting speech. He warned against the danger of Britain relying on the Congress governments for aid in the war effort and urged that it was in Muslim interest to maintain the present position. The Quaid-i Azam supported Sikandar, praised his services in glowing terms,[103] called him a strong pillar of the Muslim League[104] and asked Lari to withdraw his resolution, but as the war progressed and the situation changed, pressure on the Quaid from the younger and more radical elements increased. This occasionally led to difficulties. On some other points, there may have been only misunderstandings. The Hindu press—and perhaps some British officers—tried to accentuate these differences. Sikandar made a public reference to them some five weeks before his death and his words were memorable: "People exaggerate petty differences. Although at times, I may differ from the Quaid-i Azam on an issue, yet I

102. Ashiq Husain Batalvi, *Hamari Qaumi Jidd-o-Jahad*, p. 53.
103. (Weekly) *Inqilab*, Lahore, dated 6 December 1936.
104. Ashiq Husain Batalvi, *Hamari Qaumi Jidd-o-Jahad*, p. 141.

shall never fail to carry out his orders."[105] Looking to his previous record, this does not seem to have been empty rhetoric. It is safe to assume that Sikandar would have done everything humanly possible to avoid a break with the Quaid and the defiance of Muslim opinion, which occurred during the days of his successor.

Sikandar died on 26 December 1942 in circumstances of great poignancy. He was succeeded, as Premier, by Malik Khizr Hayat Khan Tiwana who, along with his father Sir Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana, had shown practical interest in the Pakistan scheme in its initial stages, but he lacked Sikandar's ability to reconcile conflicting points of view. He was also without Sikandar's Aligarh background, which enabled him to have a feeling for the Muslim opinion and keep close to the main current of the national aspirations. During Khizr's premiership, the working arrangement between the League and the Unionists completely broke down.

Malik Barkat Ali (1885–1946)

Before we deal with the League-Unionist struggle of 1944–47, it may be useful to say something about a prominent leader who had a long record of service to the community and, at one time, had the distinction of being the sole representative of the Muslim League in the Punjab Legislative Assembly. Malik Barkat Ali was born at Lahore on 1 April 1885 and was educated at Forman Christian College. He passed his M.A. (English) examination with distinction in 1905 and two years later was selected for the Provincial Civil Service. He did not, however, continue long in the Government service and, in course of time, became the editor of *The Observer*. He passed the LL.B. examination in 1916 and was enrolled as Advocate in 1919.

Malik Barkat Ali joined the Punjab Provincial Muslim League at an early date and belonged to that group which, in opposition to Mian Muhammad Shafi's section, was headed by Mian Fazl-i Husain and included such distinguished personali-

105. *Inqilab*, Lahore, 20 November 1942.

ties as Iqbal, Khalifah Shuja-ud-Din and Ghulam Bhik Nairang. This was considered "the progressive group". Malik Barkat Ali was a close associate of Mian Fazl-i Husain—he strongly supported Mian Fazl-i Husain's claims for appointment to the High Court on Justice Shah Din's death and was, in fact, (wrongly) believed by Governor O'Dwyer to have secured his editorship of *The Observer* through Fazl-i Husain's support—but it was characteristic of Malik Barkat Ali's liberalism that when in 1927 the All-India Muslim League split over the boycott of the Simon Commission, he joined the section headed by M.A. Jinnah, and was one of the delegates sent to the All-Parties Convention held at Calcutta at the end of 1928.

The failure of the Calcutta convention to respond to Jinnah's efforts ushered an era of great anguish and heart-searching for those who wanted to join India's struggle for freedom without sacrificing Muslim interests. For Jinnah this meant a period of wandering in the wilderness, of virtual withdrawal from politics and residence in England. The position was even more difficult for those urban leaders in the Punjab for whom the stranglehold of the Unionist Party over the provincial politics had closed all avenues of fruitful political activity. Barkat Ali must have felt this acutely. In despair, he joined the Muslim Nationalist camp for some time. He was Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Punjab Muslim Nationalist Conference held on 24 October 1931 in Bradlaugh Hall, Lahore, where he delivered a speech, of which the long extracts published in *The Indian Annual Register*, 1931, Vol. II, will surprise those who are acquainted only with Malik Barkat Ali's later political career. In this speech he criticised Separate Electorates, denounced the views expressed by Iqbal a year earlier—he said that Iqbal had recanted these views—and made a strong plea for an undivided India.

Malik Barkat Ali got his chance to re-enter the main stream of national history in 1936, when the Quaid reorganised the Muslim League for the coming elections and was unable to secure the co-operation of the Unionist Party. He, therefore, had to build up an organisation out of such material as was available.

He had the invaluable support of Iqbal, but it is an index of the Herculean task which lay before him—as, perhaps, also of his political preferences at that time—that out of eleven members, who were named from the Punjab on the Central Parliamentary Board, the majority were either comparatively unknown[106] (Syed Zain-ul-Abidin, Ch. Abdul Aziz of Begowal) or belonged to the Ahrars, Ittehad-i Millat organisation and even the Congress (Maulana Abdul Qadir Qasuri). Malik Barkat Ali was not one of the persons included (to say nothing of Ghulam Rasul Khan and Ashiq Husain Batalvi, who were newcomers to the League), but he was an old Leaguer.

Before the Parliamentary Board met at Lahore on 8 June 1936 a meeting (*ad-hoc*?) of prominent League workers of Lahore was held at the residence of Mian Abdul Aziz (outside Yakki Gate) on 12 May 1936 when Iqbal presided. At this meeting it was decided to reorganise the Punjab Provincial Muslim League. New office-bearers were elected. Iqbal was to be the President, Malik Barkat Ali and Khalifah Shuja-ud-Din Vice-Presidents, Ghulam Rasul Khan, Bar-at-Law, Secretary, and Mian Abdul Majid and Dr Ashiq Husain Batalvi as Joint Secretaries. Out of these very little is known about Mian Abdul Majid except that he was a Bar-at-Law, and probably a friend of Malik Barkat Ali. Ghulam Rasul Khan was also a Barrister, who had recently returned from Central Africa, owing to ill-health, was known to be a friend of Malik Barkat Ali. Ashiq Husain was brought into the League, when Barkat Ali and Ghulam Rasul (whom Ashiq, now, met for the first time) jointly visited him. As Iqbal was virtually incapacitated by ill-health and Khalifah Shuja-ud-Din appears to have taken only a mild interest in the affairs of the new organisation, the responsibility for running the new Punjab Provincial Muslim League fell on Malik Barkat Ali and his friends. Later, difficulties arose and the affiliation of the new Punjab Provincial Muslim League was refused by the All-India

106. The names have been given by Choudhry Khaliquzzaman (op. cit., pp. 416-17) and will repay careful study. Even out of this group, the Ahrars, etc., soon left the organisation. What a heart-breaking task had the Quaid undertaken!

Muslim League, but that cannot detract from the fact that Malik Barkat Ali and his co-workers took up the cause of the Muslim League when none else seemed willing to do so and worked hard to give the organisation a start in the province. Malik Barkat Ali also started the weekly *New Times*, at considerable financial sacrifice, to propagate the League point of view.

The Muslim League decided to put up its own candidates and out of the seven persons who applied for and got the League ticket, two were elected. One of them, Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, joined the Unionist Party, and Malik Barkat Ali had to hold the fort for the Muslim League, single-handed, in the provincial legislature. Barkat Ali delivered many eloquent speeches in the Council and from other platforms.

Adoption of what is called Sikandar-Jinnah Pact, in October 1937, however, created a new situation in the Punjab. Malik Barkat Ali and Sikandar had a long history of personal animosity. According to Dr Ashiq Husain Batalvi, this conflict began in 1921 when Barkat Ali successfully argued a petition against the election of Sikandar Hayat Khan filed by his rival Sir Muhammad Amin of Shamsabad. Barkat Ali prayed, in fact, that Sikandar should be debarred from taking part in future elections. This plea was not accepted, but Sikandar's election was declared void. Sir Muhammad Amin was declared elected and Sikandar was deprived of any share in the parliamentary life of the province till the next elections, held three years later. The way personal animosity lingered on may be seen from the fact that on the eve of 1936 elections Sikandar offered to have two (out of seven) nominees of the Muslim League elected unopposed, provided Malik Barkat Ali was not one of them. This offer was turned down by Iqbal, but it throws light on the relationship between Malik Barkat Ali and Sikandar Hayat Khan.

Even more potent than the personal differences with the Unionist leader was Barkat Ali's distaste for the basic policy and attitude of the Unionist Party. He was an able, liberal veteran of public life, with a highly developed political consciousness and could hold his own in any company. His legal works were popular with readers of all communities and his articles fre-

quently appeared in the pages of *The Tribune.* He was of an independent turn of mind and to him the loyalist, almost slavish and sycophant, policies of the Unionist Party, which had no room for enlightened urban intellectuals, was anathema. Dislodgment of the Unionist Party—even with the help of the local non-Muslims—was the great dream of his life.

Barkat Ali and Sikandar had multifarious differences, but both were responsible public men of stature and at least on one occasion were able to subordinate personal feelings to national considerations. They both were present when Sikandar-Jinnah Pact was hammered out and, although the discussions had their heated moments, they ended amicably, and Sikandar and Barkat Ali embraced each other. This cordiality, however, did not last very long. The Hindu press turned their guns on Sikandar's Hindu allies as soon as the news of the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact was flashed from Lucknow. Sir Chhotu Ram was vaguely aware of the leading Muslim Unionists' desire to come to an understanding with the League, but had not been taken into confidence before the momentous step was taken. He, however, put up a bold front and, relying on a clause in the Lucknow Formula, announced that there would be no change in the position in the Punjab. He repudiated the idea that Sikandar had surrendered to the League or that Muslim League would have the same position in the Punjab as the Congress had in the so-called Congress provinces. This brought a counter statement from Malik Barkat Ali, which inevitably provided further material to the Hindu press, and pressure on the Hindu and Sikh allies of the Unionist Party increased. Meetings, not only of Raja Narendra Nath's party, but also of the Sikh members of the Assembly were held in an effort to drive a wedge between the Unionist Party and its non-Muslim allies. This made Sikandar's position, as he put it, "extremely delicate" and "almost untenable". He poured out his woes in a long letter written on 3 November 1937 to the Quaid.[107] The point of view of the other group is contained in a detailed letter dated 8 November 1937 addressed to the Quaid by (Mian)

107. Mukhtar Masood, Ed., op. cit., pp. 12–18.

Ghulam Rasul "for Dr. Sir Mohammad Iqbal".[108] The Quaid did not treat this letter as Iqbal's and omitted it from the poet's letters published by him, but the same point of view is expressed in Iqbal's letter written two days later, which was published by the Quaid.[109] A study of these letters shows that the differences were not only about the future arrangements within the legislature but also about the reorganisation of the Muslim League in the Punjab and the position of those who had formed "the Punjab Provincial Muslim League" in 1936 and had worked as its office-bearers.

It is not known what reply was sent to Iqbal, but various overt steps taken by the Quaid leave no doubt that he did not endorse the poet's stand. Ultimately, the Muslim League high command went so far as to refuse the affiliation of the provincial organisation headed by Iqbal. Dr Ashiq Husain Batalvi has attributed this and similar steps to the influence of Nawabzadah Liaqat Ali Khan, but it is inconceivable that on such important issues which had been personally brought to his notice and particularly where Iqbal himself was concerned, the Quaid would let his opinion be swayed by anyone. The position, clearly, seems to be that the Quaid wanted a broadbased organisation in the Punjab and was not prepared to leave matters wholly or even mainly to a group which, in spite of its enthusiasm and ability to claim the patronage of Iqbal, could not muster general support. The Quaid took Malik Barkat Ali into the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League, gave ten out of thirty-five seats on the Provincial Organising Committee to his group, but refused to accept the group's major demands and put all eggs in one basket.

108. B.A. Dar, Ed., *Letters and Writings of Iqbal*, pp. 105–11.

109. This letter *is* rather sharply worded, but the admiration which Iqbal continued to feel for the Quaid even after this may be judged from a sentence quoted by Batalvi in his "Iqbal Lectures" (1967). In January 1938, Nehru visited Iqbal on his invitation and in the course of conversation made remarks implying criticism of the Quaid's leadership. Iqbal, speaking in English, spoke out, "Jinnah is the only man who can deliver the goods on behalf of the Musulmans of India, and *I am merely his soldier*" [*Journal of Research* (University of the Panjab), July 1967, p. 7]. (Italics ours.)

If the Quaid had hoped that, by giving what he considered balanced and fair representation to both groups, it would be possible to secure smooth and harmonious working of the League in the Punjab, he was to be disappointed. In fact, according to Batalvi, in February 1938, Iqbal drafted or approved a statement "so that the public may know that the Muslim League and the Unionist Party stand apart". This statement was withheld under Quaid's advice, but the two groups in the Punjab continued to work at cross-purposes. Apparently, Malik Barkat Ali was so much disgusted with the bureaucracy-controlled Unionist ministry that he gave the highest priority to its dislodgment from power. Opinion may differ as to whether his Punjab Muslim Mosques Protection Bill of 1938 was calculated primarily to secure the restoration of the Shaheed Ganj mosque or to embarrass the Unionist ministry. Batalvi has given the details of how it placed Sikandar on the horns of a dilemma and cites Professor Coupland who states that the bill created "a grave political crisis, probably involving the Premier's resignation."[110] The crisis was averted as the Governor, on the advice of the ministry, refused leave for the introduction of the bill. Sikandar, in an eloquent and statesmanlike speech, defended this action, as the passing and the proposed implementation of the bill, with retrospective effect, would lead to retaliatory action in other provinces in respect of numerous non-Muslim places of worship, which had passed into the possession of the Muslims and had become sites of important Muslim holy places (e.g. Dargah at Ajmer, Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque at Delhi). It is significant that "the Council of the Muslim League approved the Premier's conduct" with regard to Malik Barkat Ali's bill and, a month later, the special Shaheed Ganj session of the League held at Calcutta decided against launching of civil disobedience, which seems to have been favoured by Malik Barkat Ali's group.

The Mosques Protection Bill was brought up when Iqbal was alive and had his support. Later, Malik Barkat Ali went further, and worked openly to dislodge the Unionist government. He once reviewed a session of the Punjab Assembly in the course of

110. R. Coupland, *Indian Politics, 1935–42*, p. 48.

an article and suggested how all parties in the provincial legislature could combine to bring down the Unionist ministry. In December 1942, he and Dr Batalvi jointly issued a press statement in which it was urged "that the only way to finish the Unionist Party was that all parties should form a United Front against the Unionist Party, in spite of their own differences."[111] Malik Barkat Ali seems to have made repeated efforts to achieve this end. In 1941–42, Sikandar's government imposed Sales Tax in the province. Such a tax had been introduced in many provinces by the Congress governments, but in the Punjab it was so stubbornly resisted by the business community that they observed province-wide *hartal* for more than forty days. An adjournment motion to criticise the Government on this occasion was moved by Malik Barkat Ali, though practically every one of his forty-three supporters must have been a non-Muslim. This motion was lost by forty-four votes to ninety. A more determined attempt to bring down Sikandar's government was stated to have been made a little later, when, according to Baba Kharak Singh, Malik Barkat Ali had mustered so much strength that only five more votes were needed to defeat the Unionist ministry.[112]

In these circumstances, real co-operation between the two groups of the Muslim League was hardly possible, but a facade of a common political organisation was kept up. This was possible as, at the suggestion of Iqbal and Malik Barkat Ali, Nawab Sir Shah Nawaz of Mamdot was elected president of the Provincial Muslim League in place of Iqbal whose health did not permit any active work. As the new president was also acceptable to Sikandar, it was possible to hold meetings at which members of both groups were present and the League-Unionist alliance could be seen in action. Its greatest utility was, perhaps, in the all-India sphere. Sikandar Hayat attended important meetings of the All-India Muslim League and delivered eloquent speeches in support of the League point of view. He was also present at some important meetings within the province. The historic Lahore Session of 1940 was held during this period. No solid strength of

111. Dr Ashiq Husain Batalvi, *Hamari Qaumi Jidd-o Jahad*, p. 279.
112. *Vide* the leading article in the *Inqilab*, Lahore, dated 5 July 1942.

the Muslim League was, however, built up within the province, and Malik Barkat Ali could not have been happy with this state of affairs. The situation changed when, under Sikandar's successor Khizr Hayat Khan, the League and the Unionist Party came in open conflict. Barkal Ali was now in his own element and presided over some important conference.

Even before the League-Unionist split another organisation had come into existence, where Malik Barkat Ali felt much more at home than on the Unionist-dominated platform of the League. He was amongst the first to welcome the formation of the Punjab Muslim Students' Federation and soon became one of its prominent patrons. On 29 September 1937, he presided over the first important public meeting held under the auspices of the Federation. When the Federation was reorganised by the Quaid-i Azam, with a non-student president, Mian Bashir Ahmad was placed in charge of its affairs, but Malik Barkat Ali's close association with the organisation continued. In the same year, he presided over the Pakistan Conference organised by the Federation, and otherwise continued to take interest in the organisation which popularised the concept of Pakistan, before the Provincial Muslim League, under a new leadership—consisting of young Mamdot, Shaukat Hayat and Mumtaz Daultana—became active in the field.

With the break-up of the League-Unionist relationship in 1944, Malik Barkat Ali, so to say, came into his own. He was once more in the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League—in 1942, he had been left out along with Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan—and, although the fierce struggle against Khizr's government was primarily organised and led by younger and physically fitter persons, he was respected by all as the veteran Muslim League leader. He was elected unopposed in the elections of 1946. The Muslim League Party in the Punjab unanimously adopted him for the speakership of the Punjab Assembly, but he failed against the candidate of the Coalition Party. He was now getting on in years. A man of intense feelings, he was greatly upset by the death of his wife in 1945 and passed away on 5 April 1946 due to heart failure. In his condolence message,

the Quaid-i Azam paid a high tribute to his services and said: "Muslim India has lost in him a great man and I have lost in him not only a colleague and a collaborator, but also a friend."

League-Unionist Conflict (*1944–47*). Early in Khizr's regime, the Quaid brought matters to a head and demanded that the Muslim members of the Unionist Party should become full-fledged Muslim Leaguers and should abide by the discipline of the League. Khizr evaded the issue for some time, but, in April 1944, the Quaid came to Lahore and there were prolonged discussions between him and Khizr. To end the confusion, the Quaid insisted that all members of the Muslim League (including the Unionists) should belong solely to the Muslim League and the Punjab Ministry should be known as the Muslim League Coalition Ministry. These negotiations broke down on 27 April 1944. Khizr was expelled from the Muslim League, and the League-Unionist struggle commenced. The League received great accession of strength when Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan, son of Sikandar Hayat Khan, joined its ranks. He had been taken in the Punjab cabinet on the death of his father, but soon started urging the League point of view. He gave public expression to his views in the meetings held at Karnal and Sheikhupura in early 1944. At first, he was "sharply pulled up" by the Governor, and was later dismissed from the cabinet for what was called "administrative misconduct," but the step was generally taken to be a case of political vendetta.

Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan was dismissed by the Governor on 26 April 1944, i.e. on the eve of the announcement of the breakdown of Khizr-Jinnah talks. (Was the timing due to the Governor's desire to show his power and force Khizr's hands?) Even before this, a nucleus of Muslim League Party—apart from the Muslim Unionists—had formed in the Punjab Legislative Assembly. In March 1942, Sir Shah Nawaz Khan of Mamdot, who was President of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, died. He had held this position for some years and had financed books in favour of Pakistan even before the passing of the Lahore Resolution, but he had not taken a very firm line with the Unionist Party, of which he was a prominent member. In 1943,

his son Nawab Iftikhar Husain Khan became president of the provincial League. He took a different line and soon formed a small group of staunch Muslim Leaguers in the Assembly. Another prominent new Leaguer was Mian Muhammad Mumtaz Daultana, son of Nawab Ahmad Yar Khan Daultana. He had been elected to the Punjab Legislature to fill the seat caused by Sikandar Hayat's death (Shaukat was returned from another constituency sometime later). These three young men, scions of leading Unionist families, had their personal differences, but they all worked actively for the Muslim League and their entry in politics marked the beginning of a new era.

When Sardar Shaukat Hayat was dismissed from the cabinet in 1944 and there was a final break between the League and the Unionist Party, two parliamentary secretaries—Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan and Sufi Abdul Hamid—left the Unionists and joined the new group. At the next session of the provincial Assembly, Muslim League was able to muster twenty-three members who sat on the opposition benches and carried on the struggle inside the legislature. The League Party drew up a very progressive programme (drafted by Mumtaz Daultana and his friends) promising civil liberties, elimination of official interference in the elections and progressive economic policy. This programme was issued in the form of a manifesto in the first week of November 1944. On 2 December 1944, Muslim League Assembly Party elected its office-bearers. Khan Iftikhar Husain Khan of Mamdot was elected leader, Sardar Shaukat Hayat was deputy leader, Mian Allah Yar was chief whip, Mian Nur Ullah was Secretary and Rana Nasrullah was Assistant Whip.[113] All these elections were unanimous. This small group constantly exposed the misdeeds of the Unionist ministry in the Assembly and received powerful support from outside. On 5 December, Muslim students organised demonstrations outside the Assembly chambers. The demonstrators were dispersed by the police, but while there were

113. Other prominent members of the League Assembly Party whose names appear in the *Nawa-i Waqt* file for 1944 were Mian Abdul Aziz, Malik Barkat Ali, Maulvi Ghulam Mohy-ud-Din, Chaudhri Muhammad Hasan and Raja Ghazanfar Ali.

seventy (Muslim) members sitting on the ministerial benches on that day, next day there were only fifty-five.[114]

The steps which were taken by the Unionist Government to fight the Muslim League may be judged by the confidential instructions issued to all District Magistrates in the province sometime before 10 July 1944. The District Magistrates were asked:

"1. To dismiss all those Government servants who are themselves or whose dependants are interested in the League.

"2. To cancel contracts of all those contractors who are in the League or who have sympathies with the League.

"3. To threaten Muslim M.L.A.'s with reprisals if they dare leave the Unionist ranks and join the League; and if they do so in spite of these threats, to withdraw all privileges and concessions which they might be enjoying. This is already being done, e.g. in Sialkot and Ferozepur.

"4 To reward those M.L.A.'s who are with them.

"5. As far as possible, not to allow the Muslim League to hold meetings."

At Lahore, Amritsar, Jullunder, Gurgaon, Section 144 was promulgated prohibiting meetings, precisely for this purpose.[115]

The Punjab Muslim Students' Federation. After its reorganisation in 1944, the Punjab Provincial Muslim League bore the brunt of the struggle against the Unionists. In this it received powerful support from the Punjab Muslim Students' Federation which had come into existence in 1937 and was carrying on propaganda in favour of Pakistan, even before the provincial League organisation became active in the field.[116]

The proposal for the establishment of the Federation was mooted in the second week of August 1937. The daily *Inqilab*, dated 11 August, contains a long appeal to the Muslim students,

114. *Vide Nawa-i Waqt*, Lahore, dated 26 April 1962.

115. Sajjad Zaheer, op. cit., p. 33. No date is given for these instructions, but as the booklet was being written on 10 July 1944 (p. 38) the instructions must have been issued prior to that date.

116. A comprehensive history of the Punjab Muslim Students' Federation is being sponsored by the Research Society of Pakistan. This *tentative* sketch is based on the files of the *Inqilab* in the library of the Research Society, some recent articles in the *Nawa-i Waqt*, references in the Quaid's speeches and occasional notices in *The Indian Annual Register*.

issued by five students from Islamia College, Lahore (including Abdul Salam Khurshid and Abdul Sattar Khan Niazi) and two each from Government, F.C. and Dyal Singh Colleges. It was planned to hold a representative gathering in the last week of September and students from the *mofussil* were asked to communicate their views to Abdul Salam Khurshid, who seems to have been in the centre of the picture in the early stages of its organisation. (He was expelled from the Federation in 1938–39.) The move for the Federation was welcomed by the *Inqilab* in a leaderette, dated 15 August. On 27 August, the same newspaper published a letter from Mian Muhammad Shafi ("Meem Sheen"), Secretary of Inter-Collegiate Muslim Brotherhood, which had come into existence sometime earlier and had held a very successful Iqbal Day. He welcomed the proposal and suggested the inclusion of students from Sind, N.-W.F.P. and Kashmir in the organisation. The same day Iqbal issued a statement welcoming the proposed organisation, and expressing the hope that "the Muslim students of the Punjab would do everything possible to ensure complete success of the movement". Later, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, Malik Barkat Ali and Sir Shah Nawaz of Mamdot welcomed the move. *The Tribune* and other Hindu newspapers criticised the proposal and there was active opposition from those connected with the (pro-Congress) All-India Students' Federation, but the response from the Muslim students was so enthusiastic that, instead of waiting till the last week of September, the Federation came into existence on 1 September 1937. Amongst the office-bearers, provisionally elected, Hameed Nizami, Mian Muhammad Shafi and Abdul Salam Khurshid were President, Vice-President and Secretary, respectively. The association of Hameed Nizami with the organisation was a great source of strength, as he was secretary of the Islamia College Union, and the Federation was not only established but also sustained, mainly, by the students from that College. The first important public meeting organised by the Federation was held on 29 September 1937. It was presided over by Malik Barkat Ali, and many members of the staff of the Islamia College, including Professor Munir and Maulana Ilm-ud-Din Salik, deliver-

ed enthusiastic speeches in support of the Federation. The organisation received a fillup from the Lucknow session of the League. Hameed Nizami attended it and, apart from partaking of its inspiring atmosphere, received great encouragement from prominent leaders, whose messages continued to appear for several days. The Federation made a good beginning and during 1937–38 Hameed Nizami and Khurshid Alam toured the province to organise the Muslim students. Next year, some of the workers, among whom Khan Abdul Sattar Khan Niazi was prominent, took up the propagation of the Khilafat-i Pakistan ideal, which attracted the attention of the people at large and gave an impetus to the youth movement. This pace of work was, however, not maintained owing to dissensions amongst the organisers and Hameed Nizami's other preoccupations. Mirza Abdul Hamid now took charge of the Federation as President, Chaudhri Nasrullah became Secretary and Chaudhri Muhammad Sadiq, Treasurer. Through their efforts and with the help of Sir Abdul Qadir, then President of Anjuman-i Himayat-i Islam, a Special Pakistan Session of the Federation was held in Islamia College grounds in March 1941 under the presidentship of the Quaid-i Azam. A Girl Students section was organised about the same time "with the help of Lady Abdul Qadir, Fatima Begum Sahiba and Miss M. Qureshi".

Reorganisation under Mian Bashir Ahmad. The Special Pakistan Session was a landmark in the history of the Federation. It had been presided over by the Quaid-i Azam who had encouraged the organisation of the Muslim students in all areas, but saw its particular need in the Punjab. Here, the Muslim League was split into two groups. The Unionists formed the majority section, but its loyalties were divided between the rural, all-communities party and the Muslim League. The older, urban section, was free from this handicap and contained some very distinguished, dedicated personalities but had not been able to provide a firm basis for the Muslim League in the province. Under these circumstances, the value of a new dynamic organisation, free from the handicaps of the Unionists and more broad-based than the small urban group, was obvious. The Quaid took

the Students' organisation under his fostering care, and under his guidance it was decided to have a non-student President. For this office the Quaid named Mian Bashir Ahmad, son of Mian Shah Din and a dedicated Muslim Leaguer, who had looked after the arrangements for the Lahore session of 1940 as Secretary of the Reception Committee. He belonged neither to the Unionist section nor to the group opposed to Sikandar, and commanded general respect. He was duly elected ond fully justified the choice. He drew up a constitution of the Federation "with the help of Messrs Hameed Nizami, Muhammad Shafi and Hamid Ali". At this time, there were no properly constituted branches of the Federation. As an interim measure, Mian Bashir Ahmad nominated a Working Committee and office-bearers, and the work of the primary organisation was taken up in earnest. Soon properly organised and active branches were functioning at virtually all district headquarters and in other important towns. Perhaps, the most active branch was at Lyallpur, where two conferences—the Educational Conference and the Pakistan Conference, presided over respectively by Haji Sir Abdullah Haroon and Malik Barkat Ali—were held during 1941–42. The annual session of the Federation, which was held at Rawalpindi in March 1942, was presided over by Choudhry Khaliquzzaman. The work of the organisation received a handsome tribute from the Quaid, who, while speaking at the annual session of the All-India Muslim Students' Federation held at Jullunder on 15 November 1942, "congratulated the Punjab Muslim Students' Federation which had given a good account of itself since March 1941, by carrying from one district to another the message and the programme of the League."[117]

The working of the Punjab Muslim Students' Federation was not without bitter internal conflicts and long periods of inactivity (its members were most active during summer vacations and other holidays), but until the Muslim League became properly organised and active in 1944, it was the Federation which held

117. Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, Ed., *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, I, 44.

the fort in the Punjab. It provided the Quaid with a platform, unconnected with the Unionists, and an army of young, enthusiastic workers, who held meetings, conferences[118] and demonstrations, issued pamphlets and journals and spread the message of the League and Pakistan.

Hameed Nizami (1915–1962) and "Nawa-i Waqt"

Mian Bashir Ahmad, after giving the reorganised Punjab Muslim Students' Federation a good start, resigned the presidentship in favour of Hameed Nizami, who had been connected with the Federation from its inception. He carried on the good work of his predecessor, but, apparently, he did not continue very long as president. The *Inqilab* dated 4 December 1942 contains an item of news reporting a vote of no-confidence in Hameed Nizami passed by the Working Committee of the Federation. Zahur Alam Shaheed became the Acting President. Hameed Nizami's greatest contribution to the national struggle came through the newspaper *Nawa-i Waqt*, which became the mouthpiece of the new generation struggling for the achievement of Pakistan.

Hameed Nizami was born on 3 October 1915 at Sangla Hill, a small railway junction not far from Lyallpur. He was a self-made man and his early life was a great struggle. While still a student at Islamia College, Lahore, he was associated with Abdul Salam Khurshid and others in the foundation of the Punjab Muslim Students' Federation, but after getting his degree he had to look for a career. He chose journalism. After receiving training under a scheme sponsored by the Punjab Government, he worked for a short time in the Press Branch of the Punjab Government, which was headed at that time by Chaudhri Muhammad Husain, the friend and confidant of Iqbal. He also had a spell of duty on the staff of *National Congress*, an Urdu daily started by Dr Satyapal, who represented the liberal wing of the

118. One gets only glimpses of the activity of the Federation in *The Indian Annual Register*. On 19 June 1944, an important session was held at Rawalpindi, which was inaugurated by Nawabzadah Liaqat Ali Khan and presided over by Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan.

provincial Congress. Sometime later, he got a more congenial job when (in April 1944?), through the help of (Nawab) Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani, he became the manager of the Lahore office of the Orient News Agency, owned by a Muslim barrister of Patna. This gave him a steady income and also leisure for work relating to the Federation and independent journalistic activity. He also used the resources of the Orient News Agency for the projection of the League point of view and for helping the cause of Pakistan.

The year 1942 was something of a landmark in the life of Hameed Nizami. Not only was he elected President of the reorganised Punjab Muslim Students' Federation, but he was also able to convert into a weekly the newspaper with which his name is associated. The beginnings of the *Nawa-i Waqt* were very modest. It started as a small-sized fortnightly. The first issue was dated 29 March 1940, i.e. it came out within a week of the passing of the historic Lahore Resolution. Its other promoters were Dr Shabbir Husain, Dr Muhammad Jamal Bhutta, Dr Muhammad Baqir (later Principal, Oriental College) and Mr Aslam Siddiqi (later Principal Information Officer, Government of Pakistan) who all performed even minor functions in this labour of love, but the editorial responsibility was basically Hameed Nizami's. For almost a year *Nawa-i Waqt* carried the name of Mian Bashir Ahmad as the patron of the newspaper, and the first editorial was also written by him. The first issue contained messages not only from the Quaid-i Azam and Baba-i Urdu Maulvi Abdul Haq, but also from Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Sir Abdul Qadir. The twin objectives of the journal were promotion of Urdu and popularisation of the message of Iqbal. Gradually, the second objective assumed greater importance and imperceptibly made the newspaper a doughty champion of Pakistan.

On 15 November 1942, the *Nawa-i Waqt* became a weekly. Already, young men were applying pressure on Sikandar Hayat Khan. In an article in the *Nawa-i Waqt* dated 25 December 1963 appears the facsimile of a letter dated 28 February 1942 from the Quaid to "Meem Sheen" acknowledging the receipt of a press cutting containing a reiteration by Sikandar of his

support to Pakistan and a pledge by some young men headed by Hameed Nizami and "Meem Sheen" to do everything in their power for the attainment of Pakistan.

The story of how *Nawa-i Waqt* became a daily has been narrated by Begum Nizami in a special issue of the paper devoted to the memory of her husband[119] (25 February 1965):

"In the Punjab, the movement in favour of the Muslim League and Pakistan really started with the expulsion of Malik Khizr Hayat. On the morning following the night when Khizr Hayat was expelled from the Muslim League, the Quaid-i Azam sent for Hameed Nizami, editor of the weekly *Nawa-i Waqt*."

The Quaid stated that he wanted a daily to be started from Lahore, which should be a hundred-per-cent representative of the viewpoint of the Muslim League and Pakistan Movement, and desired this newspaper should be started by Hameed Nizami. "He communicated this decision or command within five minutes in a manner which left the editor of the *Nawa-i Waqt* startled." The latter raised the question of funds. Apparently, the Quaid-i Azam had worked out everything in advance. He asked Nizami not to worry about this and to discuss the details with the young Mamdot. The Nawab of Mamdot who was in the adjoining room told Nizami that what Quaid had in view was a Company or Partnership with five shareholders—Mamdot, Mumtaz Daultana, Mian Bashir Ahmad, Hameed Nizami and Nizami's nominee. The next day Nizami proposed the name of his friend Hamid Mahmud, later Managing Editor, Nawa-i Waqt Publications, Ltd. The drafting of a deed of partnership was entrusted to Mahmud Ali Qasuri, who completed it in three or four days, but in the meanwhile Mumtaz Daultana suggested that Hameed Nizami might accept compensation for his interest and the daily should be owned by the other three shareholders. Hameed Nizami—after consulting some friends—did not agree to this, and decided to bring out the daily under his and Hamid Mahmud's proprietorship. The daily *Nawa-i Waqt* came out on 22

119. The account appears in an article containing extracts from Hameed Nizami's diary, and is "in quotes". Although written in the third person, the extract may very well have been drafted by Nizami himself.

July 1942, with "a prayer and a message" from the Quaid-i Azam.

When the *Nawa-i Waqt* became a daily, the press in the Punjab was firmly under the Unionist control. The only honourable exception was the daily *Ihsan*, and one would have liked to be able to record something about the contribution of Malik Nur Elahi and his co-workers, but the file of the newspaper is not available and those connected with it have adopted a self-effacing attitude about their work which, however noble, does not help the historian. In any case, the *Nawa-i Waqt* had a character of its own. It was the mouthpiece of the younger generation which had been inspired by Iqbal, its management was competent and, although it was a privately-owned newspaper, for all practical purposes it was the organ of the Muslim League. It gave full publicity to the activities of the League, kept a critical watch on what the Unionist Party was doing to bolster up the Zamindara League, etc., published poems and articles in support of the demand for Pakistan and became a powerful factor in the swing of the public opinion in the Punjab.

Hameed Nizami was barely twenty-nine when he became the editor of the daily *Nawa-i Waqt*. His simple, matter-of-fact[120] style indicated a cool head, and there is no doubt that he was clear-headed, methodical and shrewd. Without these qualities, he could not have made the *Nawa-i Waqt*, with all its limitations (not only in the financial sphere), such a power and himself such a legend. He, early, developed a style which enabled him to convey all that he wished to say without exposing himself to

120. It is a pity that most of the articles devoted to the memory of an editor, who rescued Urdu journalism from its besetting evil of verbosity and introduced a matter-of-fact style, are largely impressionistic and seldom contain much verified factual information. In fact, after several Hameed Nizami numbers of *Nawa-i Waqt* had appeared, Zahur Alam Shaheed had to do considerable research and dig up Nizami's date of birth by examining his passport! Apathy towards hard facts has become almost a national malady with us. It is sad to think that Iqbal's year of birth as given on his *mazar* is wrong and the correct year was first indicated by a foreigner. It was another foreigner (Hector Bolitho) who first looked up Quaid's school record and pointed out the discrepancy between the date of birth given there and the date generally accepted.

lawful punitive action. Great skill and self-control were needed to undermine the Unionist government day in and day out but gave its officers no excuse to take action against the newspaper. Hameed Nizami possessed all this, but there are good reasons to believe that his cool, cautious approach only represented the upper crust of a highly intense, emotional—and even complex—personality. Naseem Hijazi, who shared a house with Nizami for some time, described in an informative article three disquieting disorders, from which Nizami suffered between 1938 and 1940 and all were related to heart or nervous system. There is, no doubt, that, in spite of an almost perennial smile on his lips and a seeming nonchalance, Nizami suffered from acute nervous tension which, probably, had its base in hidden—and not so hidden—conflicts.

The role of the Quaid-i Azam in the conversion of the *Nawa-i Waqt* into a daily has been outlined. Nizami was a valued, active helpmate of the Quaid, but perhaps it is fair to say that he was fascinated more by Iqbal's romantic idealism than what The Aga Khan has called Quaid's "cool common sense". The attachment to Iqbal is obvious from the fact that one of the two objectives for which the *Nawa-i Waqt* came into existence was propagation of Iqbal's teachings—in fact, the early issues of the newspaper carried the inscription "To the Memory of Hakim-ul-Ummat Allamah Iqbal"[121]—but there is also reason to believe that, at least at one stage, Nizami expressed disenchantment with the Muslim League leadership—not excluding the Quaid-i Azam.

121. *Vide* Dr Muhammad Jamal Bhutta's article in *Nawa-i Waqt*, 25 February 1968.

Another significant pointer appears in Dr Syed Abdullah's article in *Nawa-i Waqt*, 24 February 1963. Hameed Nizami had published a letter in his newspaper, which involved criticism of the Oriental College. Explaining its publication, Nizami said to Syed Abdullah: "... there are three things in respect of which I am utterly pitiless and unforgiving. The first is Islam, the second Pakistan and its national culture, e.g. the question of Urdu, and the third is Iqbal. If somebody says anything against any of these three, my heart is hardened (becomes *sakht aur shadeed)* against him." Omission of the Quaid from (and inclusion of Iqbal in) the three things, on which Nizami felt very strongly, makes his attitude clear.

The recently published *Makatib-i Bahadur Yar Jang* contains (on pp. 522 and 546–48) two important letters written by the Nawab in reply to letters received from Hameed Nizami in February 1944. Nizami's own letters have not been published, but Nawab's replies leave no doubt that the original letters must have contained a criticism of the League leadership and an expression of a desire to see the rise of a new leader. Out of the League leaders Liaqat Ali Khan and another have been mentioned by name, but the criticism seems to have been so general and intense that the absence of a specific mention of the Quaid as an exception is significant, as also is the desire for a new leader.

Apparently, Nizami's dissatisfaction with the League leaders in February 1944 was due to their refusal to commit themselves to the establishment of an Islamic State in Pakistan and their policy of leaving this question to the chosen representatives of Pakistan. Nizami may have, ultimately, appreciated the reasons underlying the standpoint of the League leaders. His desire to see an Islamic order in Pakistan was lifelong—so was Quaid's; only as a lawyer and a realist, he saw the tremendous problems[122] involved in the process more clearly—but in course of time, Nizami became very critical of the Jamaat-i Islami which had all along been finding fault with the League on this point. When, in 1948, Maulana Maududi gave an interview regarding *jihad* in Kashmir which was likely to create problems for Pakistan, Hameed Nizami wrote powerful articles criticising these views and paved the way for penal action against Maulana by Mamdot ministry.

Hameed Nizami wrote his letters to Nawab Bahadur Yar Jang in February 1944. Two months later the bugles were blowing and the League-Unionist conflict had started. Hameed Nizami was entrusted with an important sector, and he carried

122. The Quaid gave an exposition of some of these problems in a long discussion he had with the students at Hyderabad on 19 August 1941. Unluckily, an account of these discussions does not appear in the Quaid's *Speeches and Statements*, but the Orient Press issued an account (based on the notes taken by Mahmud Ali of Osmania University) at the end of 1942 and is contained in the *Inqilab* dated 8 January 1942.

on the battle with implicit loyalty, great skill and fierce determination. The way he crossed swords with even the former critics of the Unionists like Dr Ashiq Husain Batalvi, to defend League's current policies and personalities, may be read in Batalvi's own words. Writing about his limited acquaintance with Hameed Nizami, he continues to say:

> "Actually in 1946, there was an occasion for active opposition between us. I had written a number of articles against the Cabinet Mission Plan and had vehemently criticised the decision of the Muslim League. Nizami wrote vigorous articles in reply, and bitterness marked the writings on both sides. In those days, once, Mr Nizami wrote sarcastically about me in his newspaper that I was not even a member of the Muslim League. I replied, 'Yes, I am not a member of the Muslim League, and I consider it a disgrace to be a member of the League of which the leadership in the Punjab is in the hands of Mamdot and Daultana'."[123]

Hameed Nizami—essentially a fighter—was in his element in the League-Unionist conflict and his role in the Punjab was more exacting and difficult than that of the *Dawn* in the bigger sphere of the subcontinent. He played it with great distinction and, although he was only thirty-two when the battle for Pakistan was won, he had already secured a niche in national history.

In the elections of 1946, the Muslim League opposed the Unionist Party and, thanks to the inspiring leadership of the Quaid-i Azam and solid work put in by an army of workers, won an overwhelming victory. The Muslim members of the Punjab Assembly were now in a position to make their contribution to the foundation of Pakistan, but owing to a coalition of the Hindus and Sikhs with a handful of Muslim Unionists, the League was kept out of the government. In fact, the Muslim League had to conduct a major province-wide agitation to keep the bureaucracy in check. These developments on the eve of Partition have been described elsewhere. It may not, however, be out of place to refer here to the tragic consequences of Khizr's defiance of the Muslim public opinion in 1944 and—what was worse—again in 1946, when the election results had left no doubt about the

123. *Vide* Batalvi's article in *Nawa-i Waqt* dated 24 February 1963.

position of the League. His break with the Muslim League and the manner in which the fight against that organisation was carried on by the bureaucracy had terrible consequences for the province, for the Muslims of the area, for the Unionist Party and for Khizr himself. It is anybody's guess as to what would have been the future of the Punjab if an unreal situation had not been allowed to continue till practically the end of the British rule. An orderly transfer of power and even maintenance of law and order became impossible which brought endless misery to the entire population. Of course, the Muslims suffered specially, on account of division in their ranks and the fact that a handful of legislators sought to speak in the name of the community which constituted the majority of the provincial population.

The consequences for Khizr and the Unionist Party were no less disastrous. His political career came to an abrupt end and the Unionist Party was wiped out of existence. In fact, the bitterness of the League-Unionist conflict did not merely affect the course of the later events. It also cast a deep shadow on what had happened earlier. The public forgot what the Unionist leadership had done for the Muslims in general and for the rural masses in particular, during the sixteen years of Montford Reforms (1921–1936). It also lost sight of the fact that from 1937 to 1944 the Unionist Party was in alliance with the Muslim League, and that Khizr's predecessor, Sikandar Hayat Khan, had been called a strong pillar of the Muslim League by the Quaid-i Azam himself. The memory of what happened during the three years beginning with the dismissal of Sardar Shaukat Hayat in April 1944, and ending with the resignation of Khizr Hayat Khan on 3 March 1947, overshadowed everything else.

Perhaps the most unfortunate result of the bitter League-Unionist conflict has been the hardening of cleavage between the urban intellectuals and the rural pragmatists in the former Punjab. A certain diversity of interests and outlook between rural and urban areas is universal. In the former Punjab, this is more marked as the language most generally used in the rural areas is Punjabi, while Urdu has much greater impact in the urban areas. The fact that the leaders of the party which claimed to be the

champions of rural interests adopted an indefensible position[124] at a crucial moment in national history led to the eclipse of the party. This was natural and would not cause any regret, but an unfortunate byproduct of the bitter conflict has been that the interests of the rural population have also suffered. In the areas where cleavage between the rural and urban population is not so marked, the urban intellectuals take a more active interest in the rural affairs, have an intimate understanding of their conditions, outlook and problems and, with their intellectual advantages, make material contribution to the rural welfare. In the former Punjab this is not noticeable. The manner in which Land Alienation Act, which saved Muslim cultivators in pre-Partition days, has been watered down, and organisations like the Co-operative Department, set up mainly for the benefit of small cultivators, have either suffered in neglect or have been diverted to the advantage of the urban areas without attracting any attention, is an index of what is happening.

BENGAL

Syed Nawab Ali Chowdhry (1863–1929)

Events leading to the first partition of Bengal, its annulment and the effect of that annulment on Nawab Salim Ullah Khan of

124. The reprehensible policy adopted by the Unionist Government has been described by Sajjad Zaheer, from whose pamphlet we have quoted. Even more lurid light on the plans of the British Governor and the Unionist Chief Minister comes from another source. N.V. Gadgil, who was a member of the Indian Cabinet at the time of Partition and was later appointed as Governor of East Punjab, has published his reminiscences in a revealing book headed *Government from Inside.* The book is not available in Pakistan but according to an extensive review in the weekly *Link* of New Delhi dated 16 June 1968 (p. 41), N.V. Gadgil states in his book that in 1946, "the then Governor of the Punjab was ready to take drastic steps against the Muslim League. He was waiting for the excuse of a Hindu-Muslim riot. It is widely believed in the Punjab that Khizar Hayat Khan (who then headed the Punjab Ministry) took Hindu and Sikh leaders into confidence. Even a minor disturbance would have been sufficient excuse for declaring the League unlawful but the Congress cult of non-violence and lack of courage on the part of the Sikhs came in the way."

Dacca have been outlined earlier. "The unsettling of the settled division of Bengal" meant the end of the political career of Salim Ullah, but the new possibilities which had opened up before the Muslims and the Hindu-Muslim struggle over the Partition had brought forward some men who carried on the work after Salim Ullah. One of them who was Salim Ullah's co-worker, but lived long enough to be the first Muslim minister in Bengal under Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, was Syed Nawab Ali Chowdhry, whose grandson Muhammad Ali of Bogra was, at one time, Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Nawab Ali Chowdhry was born in December 1863 and was educated at St Xavier's Collegiate School. His paternal home was at Dhanbari in the district of Mymensingh, but by marrying the daughter and heir of Nawab Abdus Sobhan Chowdhry of Bogra, he became connected with Bogra also. The first important activity of his, which we have been able to trace, relates to his prominent part in the thirteenth session of the All-India Mohammadan Educational Conference held at Calcutta in 1899. This session of the Conference, the first to be held in Bengal—thanks to all-India vision and contacts of Mohsin-ul-Mulk—was an historic occasion, inasmuch as it brought together, for the first time, the important Muslim leaders of Bengal and Northern India. Almost all the prominent Bengali leaders of the day were present. Syed Ameer Ali was the President of the Conference. Two other important local leaders, singled out for special mention in his address by the Chairman of the Reception Committee, were Nawab Ahsan Ullah (father of Nawab Salim Ullah) and Syed Nawab Ali Chowdhry. Important local speakers included Maulvi (later Sir) Shamsul Huda, "Maulvi Abdullah M.A. Suhrawardy" (Abdullah al-Mamun Suhrawardy?), Z.R. Zahid (Zahid Suhrawardy?), Maulvi Muniruzzaman Islamabadi, the well-known Bengali writer and journalist, and Abdul Hamid, Editor of *Muslim Chronicle*, Calcutta. There was a strong contingent from Northern India, including Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Sardar Muhammad Hayat Khan, K.B. Barkat Ali Khan, Allamah Shibli, Maulvi Nazir Ahmad, Mian Shah Din, Mian Muhammad Shafi, Shaikh Abdul Qadir, Munshi Mahbub Alam and Sahibzadah Aftab Ahmad

Khan. Maulvi Shamsul Huda called the session the most important gathering of the Muslims he had witnessed during his fifteen years' stay in Calcutta and thought that it augured well for the national progress and was indicative of far-reaching changes in the condition of the Muslims of Calcutta. At this historic session of the Educational Conference, which was perhaps second in importance only to the Dacca session of 1906 when the foundation of All-India Muslim League was laid, Syed Nawab Ali played a prominent role. He delivered many eloquent speeches in Urdu and the principal resolution proposing that the Aligarh College should be raised to the level of a University was moved by him in an impressive speech. Another Urdu speech of his was commended by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal who was present at one of the sittings.

Nawab Ali, who recited a Bengali poem at the Calcutta Conference, was appointed Secretary of the Provincial Sub-Committee which was set up to keep a watch over the elementary education of the Muslims of Bengal. Soon after the Conference Nawab Ali made his debut as an author in Bengali. In 1901, he published a book entitled *Id-ul-Azha* extending over some 174 pages, dealing with various aspects of the important Muslim festival. Two years later, he published a Bengali *Maulood Sharif* extending over some 180 pages and dealing with the birth and infancy of the Holy Prophet. He also helped Bengali journalism. He was patron of *Muslim Hitaishi* and also purchased a printing press for *Mihr-o Sudhakar*. He gave monetary assistance to Bengali writers like Mir Musharraf Husain, Shaikh Abdul Rahim (author of Prophet's life).

Meanwhile, he was attending to the affairs of his estate and local institutions. It is said that by his good management he increased the income of Dhanbari estate ten times. His sphere of interest widened greatly with the Partition of Bengal and the creation of the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam in 1905. Next to Nawab Salim Ullah, he seems to have been the most active non-official in the new province and he gave vigorous expression to the Muslim point of view. A selection of the papers of (Sir) James Dunlop Smith, who was Private Secretary to Lord

Minto at the time of the Simla Deputation, shows that Syed Nawab Ali was one of the first to protest vigorously when the resignation of Sir Dampfyde Fuller, the Lieutenant-Governor of Eastern Bengal and Assam, who was considered to be favourable to Muslims, was accepted by the Viceroy. In the last week of August 1906, Dunlop Smith received a copy of a letter which Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk had addressed to the Principal of the Aligarh College. In this communication Mohsin-ul-Mulk quoted from a letter of Syed Nawab Ali giving expression to a strong feeling of resentment amongst the Muslims of Bengal. Syed Nawab Ali wrote:

"Up till now the Muhammadans of Bengal have been careless. They have now begun to feel the consequences of their carelessness. If only Muhammadans of Bengal, instead of following the Government, had agitated like the Hindus and had enlisted the sympathies of the Muhammadans of the whole of India, and raised their voice up to the Parliament, they would never see these unfortunate circumstances." [125]

The resignation—rather, the virtual dismissal—of Lieutenant-Governor Fuller [126] caused deep resentment amongst the Muslims of the new province. They held meetings at various places—at Dacca, Netrakona, Mymensingh and Noakhali—"expressing their regret and protest". At Dacca, a "mass meeting of 30,000 Muslims passed a resolution deploring the resignation of Fuller, and regretted that the Government had accepted Fuller's resignation without regard to Muhammadan interests and had done great injustice to His Majesty's loyal subjects." [127] Many top administrators and leading students of current affairs were also critical of the decision. Ibbetson, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, warned the Viceroy: "I am convinced that it will be political madness to throw Fuller over." Sir Valentine Chirol, the influential repre-

125. Quoted in Martin Gilbert, *Servant of India*, p. 55.

126. The Congress newspapers accused Fuller of being pro-Muslim. They never noticed how pro-Hindu and anti-Muslim had Antony Macdonnal been—as Lieutenant-Governor of Bihar and later of U.P. Even after retirement, he declared the recognition of Muslims a mistake, "the Hindus being the real people" (M.N. Das, *India under Morley and Minto*, p. 177).

127. A.K. Majumdar, *Advent of Independence*, pp. 338–39.

sentative of *The Times*, was equally critical. Minto tried to defend his decision,[128] but he must have realised that it was an unfortunate step which he was compelled to take and that the Muslim opinion in Eastern Bengal was greatly perturbed. It was partly to soothe this feeling of resentment to which Syed Nawab Ali Chowdhry gave such forceful expression that Lord Minto adopted a conciliatory approach to the demands made by the Muslim Deputation a few weeks later. As Dr Wasti, referring to the Simla Deputation, says, "Minto and Hare [the new Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal] were thinking to find ways and means to pacify the Muslims who were agitated at Fuller's resignation."[129] He also brings out the fact that Government action was condemend by Muslims "throughout the country" and "heavily attended meetings were held at almost every important town of India" including far-off places like Multan. "The resignation of Fuller stirred up the Muslims just as the Partition and Swadeshi movement had popularised the Congress."[130]

Nawab Ali Chowdhry was a prominent member of the Simla Deputation and took active[131] part in the organisation of the Muslim League, which was established shortly thereafter. He was made a Nawab in 1911 and after Nawab Salim Ullah's death he became the seniormost Muslim leader in East Bengal. It is worth recording that in 1916 he joined Sir Abdul Rahim in refusing to sign the Lucknow Pact,[132] presumably as it did not safeguard the legitimate rights of the Muslims of Bengal. In 1918, he became the President of the Central National Mohammadan Association. At one stage he carried on a public controversy with the poet

128. *Vide* Minto's letter to Chirol in Martin Gilbert, op. cit., pp. 238–39.

129. Syed Razi Wasti, *Lord Minto and the Indian Nationalist Movement, 1905 to 1910*, p. 12.

130. Ibid., pp. 60–61.

131. His Urdu letter to Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk referring to the discussions by members of the Deputation at Simla to set up a Muslim political organisation has been preserved at the Conference Hall of the Aligarh University and has been partially reproduced by Lal Bahadur, op. cit., p. 39.

132. G. Allana, *Pakistan Movement—Historic Documents*, p. 40.

Rabindranath Tagore on the use of Persian and Arabic words in Bengali.

Nawab Syed Nawab Ali Chowdhry was the first Muslim minister to be appointed in Bengal under the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme. He held this post from 3 January 1921 to 3 January 1924, and was in charge of Public Works, Excise, Agriculture and Industries. Sir Surendranath Banerjea, called "the uncrowned king of Bengal" during the anti-Partition agitation, was his colleague in this ministry while Sir Abdul Rahim was an Executive Councillor. Nawab Ali had not received high modern education and some Muslim leaders of Calcutta felt aggrieved at his selection, but Surendranath, who has referred to this in his autobiography, remarks with regard to Syed Nawab Ali's administration of his departments that "the Governor of the province himself has recorded an emphatic eulogy". He also says that, although Nawab Ali and he were previously arraigned in hostile camps during the earlier partition of Bengal, between the Nawab and his Hindu colleagues, the personal relations were friendly and cordial. "Only in one matter was there any marked difference and [that] despite the practical lesson afforded by our joint action as Ministers. That was in connection with the question of communal representation. The Nawab Sahib and Sir Abdur Rahim, Member of the Executive Council, were both its active and thoroughgoing supporters, and we, the Hindu Ministers, were as wholeheartedly opposed to it. Our Muhammadan colleagues would make no compromise."[133] After the expiry of Syed Nawab Ali's term, new ministers were appointed, but by then the Swarajists had entered the Assembly with a view "to wreck the reforms" and the new ministries were shortlived. In the succession of changes which were introduced to find a stable ministry, Syed Nawab Ali Chowdhry again became a minister on 14 March 1925, but he had to resign within a fortnight owing to a vote of no-confidence. He passed away an 17 April 1929. Before his death, he worked as Executive Councillor.[134] He died of

133. Sir Surendranath Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 314.
134. Sir Robert Reid, *Years of Change*, p. 50.

pneumonia at Darjeeling and his body was brought for burial to the family home at Dhanbari.

Sir Shamsul Huda (1862–1922)

Another notable from East Pakistan about whom very little is heard nowadays was Nawab Sir Shamsul Huda. He was born in 1862 in a village in Comilla district. His father Riazat Ullah was a classical scholar and editor of the *Doorbeen*, a Persian weekly started in the seventh decade of the last century. Shamsul Huda had a brilliant educational career. He graduated in Law from the Calcutta University and also passed M.A. Examination in Persian. After serving for some time as Associate Professor in Arabic and Persian at the Calcutta Madrasah, he joined the High Court Bar. He became a member of the Senate of the Calcutta University in 1894. In 1899, he took active part in the Calcutta session of Mohammadan Educational Conference. He was appointed Tagore Professor of Law in 1902.

Side by side with his attention to education and law, Shamsul Huda found means for satisfying his inherited interest in journalism. He "financed" the Bengali weekly *Sudhakar*. In addition he bought the Urdu Guide Press and "financed"[135] *The Muhammadan Observer*, which was the first English weekly in Bengal to be owned by a Muslim. He was active in the session of All-India Mohammadan Educational Conference held at Calcutta in 1899, and delivered many speeches.

In 1910, Shamsul Huda was nominated to the Indian Legislative Assembly to represent the Muslims of East Bengal. In 1912, he was appointed a member of the Governor's Executive Council —the first time, when, according to Sir Robert Reid, a non-official was appointed to this high post.[136] He maintained this

135. *Vide* Syed Murtaza Ali's *Personality Profiles*, p. 31. He, possibly, means that Shamsul Huda gave financial help to *The Muhammadan Observer* at some stage of its career. According to S. Rahman, *Muhammadan Observer* was established in 1880 (*Pakistan Plan*, p. 25). This was some years before Shamsul Huda took his degree. *Sudhakar* was started in November 1889.

There is a great need for an adequate history of Muslim press in Bengal. It will illuminate many phases of national history.

136. Sir Robert Reid, op. cit., p. 28.

position till 1919 when he was appointed Judge of Calcutta High Court. In 1921, he became the President of Bengal Legislative Assembly under Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme, but died soon thereafter, in October 1922.

Apart from the patronage of newspapers, which contributed to the awakening amongst the Bengali Muslims, Shamsul Huda's main contribution was in promotion of Muslim education. He was instrumental in starting the Carmichael Hostel. Before this, Muslim students from the *mofussil* had to face great hardship in finding suitable residential accommodation[137] in Calcutta. Shamsul Huda was also responsible for the creation of the posts of Assistant Directors for Muslim Education[138] at the provincial level and one Assistant Inspector in each division for fostering the cause of Muslim education. He worked hard for the establishment of a Government College for the Muslims in Calcutta. As a result of his efforts a sum of rupees nine lakhs was sanctioned by the Bengal Government and even land for the college was purchased, but on account of the outbreak of the First World War,[139] the college could not be started during Shamsnl Huda's tenure of office as Executive Councillor. The seeds sown by him, however, germinated and, after being nourished by A.K. Fazl-ul-Haq during his brief tenure as Education Minister, bore fruit in 1926.

137. The year 1898 saw the opening of Elliot Madrash Hostel, for which two-thirds of the funds were made available by Government and a sum of Rs. 5400 was contributed by Nawab Abdul Latif Memorial Committee. This hostel was, however, for the use of Madrasah students only. Nawab Abdul Latif had been advocating the construction of hostels for Muslims, but passed away in 1893 before his dream could be realised. Carmichael Hostel was a Central Muhammadan Hostel for University students.

138. The annual report of the Mohammadan Educational Conference held in 1899 at Calcutta contains the Urdu translation of an important speech dealing with the educational problems of the Muslims of Bengal (pp. 65–86) delivered by Maulvi Abdul Karim, "Assistant Inspector of Schools, Bengal," but presumably he held a general appointment and was not concerned solely with the Muslim education.

139. The above section relating to Sir Shamsul Huda is largely based on Syed Murtaza Ali's account in his *Personality Profiles* (pp. 31–33).

A.K. Fazl-ul-Haq (1873–1962)

The work of two leaders from East Bengal who had entered public life in the first decade of the twentieth century has been outlined above, but the person whom Nawab Salim Ullah specially encouraged[140] and chose to carry on his work was another. Writing about Fazl-ul-Haq, whose long political career enabled him to bridge the gulf between the first Partition of Bengal and the creation of Pakistan, A.F. Noor-un-Nabi says:

"Nawab Sir Salimullah Bahadur of Dacca was the recognized leader of the Muslims of Bengal at the time. His discerning eye fell upon Mr. Fazl-ul-Haq. Soon after he joined the High Court Bar, at the instance of the Nawab he was selected to preside over the annual session of the Bengal Presidency Muslim League held at Dacca in 1912. The presidential address which Mr. Fazl-ul-Haq delivered at the time at once marked him out as a gifted leader of the Muslims and as the intellectual successor of Nawab Khwajah Sir Salimullah Bahadur in the political field."[141]

Maulvi Abul Kasem Fazl-ul-Haq was born in October 1873 in a village of Barisal district of East Pakistan. His father, the third Muslim graduate in the Presidency of Bengal, was Government Pleader and Public Prosecutor. His grandfather was a good scholar of Persian and a successful Mukhtar. Fazl-ul-Haq had a brilliant educational career. He was educated at Barisal District School and later at Presidency College and took his M.A. in 1895 in Mathematics. Subsequently, he got Law Degree and was enrolled as a Vakil in the Calcutta High Court in 1900 becoming a junior to the late Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee.

140. A.S.M. Abdur Rab in his *A.K. Fazl-ul-Haq, His Life and Achievements*, describes at length how, at the instance of Nawab Salim Ullah Khan, a grand reception was arranged in the honour of Fazl-ul-Haq, after he resigned from government service and returned to Calcutta to join the Bar and enter public life. "At the instance of the Nawab of Dacca, Siraj-ul-Islam, Mr. Abul Kasim [presumably father of Mr Abul Hashem, later General Secretary of Bengal Muslim League, 1943-47], Nawab Nawab Ali Chowdhury, Maulana Akram Khan and others received him at the Sealda station." At the grand reception meeting the Nawab himself presided (p. 16). Incidentally, the gentlemen named above may be fairly considered to belong to Nawab Salim Ullah's group.

141. *The Pakistan Observer*, Dacca, Eid Supplement.

The sudden death of his father in 1901 compelled him to return to Barisal, where he started legal practice and looked after the family property. He had already married Khurshid Talaat Begum, the daughter of Nawab Syed Muhammad Azad. Fazl-ul-Haq's father-in-law who belonged to a leading Muslim family of Bengal had married a daughter of Nawab Abdul Latif and was a well-known Urdu writer. His other daughter was married to Lt.-Col. Sir Hasan Suhrawardy, first Muslim Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University and maternal uncle of Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy, later Prime Minister of Pakistan. One of Azad's sons, Syed Husain, achieved fame as editor of *The Independent*, Allahabad, and was Indian Ambassador to Egypt after 1947. Another of his sons, Syed Ali Ahmad, became Inspector General of Registration, Bengal, and the remaining sons also held high government appointments. Fazl-ul-Haq's marriage, which was issueless,[142] ultimately ended in separation but presumably his new relatives attracted him, in spite of his legal training and father's example, to government service. There were other pulls in the same direction. His younger sister was married to Syed A. Salik, the author of *Early Heros of Islam*, etc., who was a member of Bengal Civil Service (and the father of Syed Mahbub Murshid, later Chief Justice of East Pakistan). Fazl-ul-Haq received an offer of Deputy Collectorship from Sir Bampfyde Fuller, the Lieutenant-Governor of the newly-created province of Eastern Bengal and Assam, and joined the Bengal Civil Service in 1905. He worked as Deputy Collector and was promoted Deputy Registrar, Co-operative Credit Societies, Eastern Bengal and Assam. He, however, resigned[143] in 1912 and resumed practice at Calcutta

142. His second marriage into a religious family of Bengal also proved issueless. Ultimately he married, at the age of 68, a "lady of aristocratic origin" from Meerut (U.P.) and his only son Faiz-ul-Haq was born, of whom he used to be exceedingly fond.

143. According to *Nawa-i Waqt* (29 April 1962), this resignation was submitted in protest against the annulment of Partition of Bengal. A writer says in *The Pakistan Observer*, "Sher-i-Bangala Supplement," 27 April 1965, that Fazl-ul-Haq gave up his job at the call of Nawab Salim Ullah (p. 1). According to his biographer also: "Friends and admirers requested Fazl-ul-

High Court. Next year he was elected to the Bengal Legislative Council, and continued to be a member of the provincial legislature till 1954 when he became the Governor of East Pakistan. He was already associated with the Bengal Presidency Muslim League and in 1913 became its General Secretary, while Nawab Salim Ullah Khan was its President. In the same year, he made a powerful speech in the Bengal Legislative Council which has been reproduced by his biographer[144] and displays his thorough study of the educational problems of Bengali Muslims. In 1918, he was the President of the All-India Muslim League as well as the General Secretary of All-India National Congress. During this period his main contribution to the welfare of the Bengali Muslims was the safeguarding of their interests at Lucknow. He was one of the supporters of the Lucknow Pact, under which the Muslims of Bengal got 40% of elected seats. This was substantially less than their share on the basis of population, but considering that they could secure only 10·4% of actual representation under Minto-Morley Reforms, it meant a great improvement and represented the biggest gain accruing to any Muslim province. Other delegates who attended and took part in the session at Lucknow included Nawab Syed Muhammad, Maulana Akram Khan and Abul Qasim.

Meanwhile Fazl-ul-Haq had already started activities on behalf of the Bengal peasants (among whom the Muslims formed the majority) which later led to the formation of Krishak Proja Party. Fazl-ul-Haq came from rural areas, and his spell of service in the Co-operative Department had given him a keen insight into the sufferings of the peasantry. He started Krishak Proja Samitis at an early date,[145] and gave expression to an interest

Haq to resign his job and lead the counter movement against the annulment of Partition" (Abdur Rab, op. cit., p. 12). It has also been said that Fazl-ul-Haq resigned Government service as he was not appointed Registrar, Co-operative Societies. Presumably, many motives were responsible for the step.

144. A.S.M. Abdur Rab, op. cit., pp. 20–27.

145. According to Abdur Rab, Fazl-ul-Haq started the Peasant Movement as early as 1915, but this movement "was turned into an organised political party in the historic Proja Conference of Dacca in 1924" (pp. 28–30).

which remained dear to his heart all his life and, in due course, led to the passing of far-reaching measures for the amelioration of the condition of the rural masses.

In 1918, Fazl-ul-Haq presided over the Delhi session of the All-India Muslim League. He was also the General Secretary of the All-India National Congress during this year.[146] He was appointed a member of the Inquiry Committee which was set up by the Congress to report on Jallianwala Bagh massacre, and which included top leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru. His biographer seems justified in holding that had Fazl-ul-Haq not left the Congress on the question of Non-Co-operation, he would have been President of that body before Pandit Motilal Nehru.[147]

He was also active in the Khilafat movement and presided over the second All-India Khilafat Conference held at Delhi in 1920. His interest, however, cooled down as the Khilafat leaders, along with the Congress, adopted a comprehensive programme of Non-Co-operation, while Fazl-ul-Haq was opposed to the bycott of schools, colleges and councils.

Like the Quaid-i Azam and Fazl-i Husain, Fazl-ul-Haq parted company with the Congress when it gave up constitutional means for achieving its political aims and decided on Non-Co-operation. In 1924, he became Education Minister in the government of Bengal, but the Ministry was overthrown within six months, owing to the opposition of the Swarajists under C.R. Das, who had the support of the Muslim Khilafatists. Even during this short term of office, Fazl-ul-Haq tried to help the establishment of the Islamia College, Calcutta, which was ultimately opened in July 1926. The other steps which he took for the betterment of Muslims in educational and cultural spheres were the creation of a special directorate for Muslim education and provision of a new double-storeyed building for the Muslim Institute at Calcutta.

During the years 1925 to 1936, Fazl-ul-Haq did not find any place in the provincial government, but he was not politically inactive. Ram Gopal, for example, quotes from a memorandum,

146. Ibid., pp. 59–60.

147. Ibid., p. 60.

which Fazl-ul-Haq submitted to the Reforms Enquiry Committee in 1924, in which he urged the need for proper safeguards while extending the system of representative government.[148] Next year, he presided at the Bengal Muslim Conference held at Faridpur on 2 May, when he urged the Muslims to organise themselves, to start an association on the lines of the Hindu Mahasabha and to cover the whole of Bengal with a network of branches.[149] He, however, seems to have remained close to the "Nationalist" group for some time and in 1928 along with Abu Husain Sarkar attended a Nationalist Conference held at Allahabad with Dr Ansari as its President, to consider the Nehru Report. According to Fazl-ul-Haq's biographer, in the Khilafat Committee (Conference ?) which met in December 1928 to consider Nehru Committee's proposals, "the Punjab group led by Maulana Zafar Ali Khan and the Bengal group led by Fazl-ul-Haq, Maulana Akram Khan and Ashraf-ud-Din Chowdhury were in favour of compromise with the Congress, while the new Khilafat Committee of Calcutta led by Mr Shaheed Suhrawardy was against any compromise with the Congress on the question of reservation of Muslim seats in the Muslim majority provinces."[150] Fazl-ul-Haq's several co-workers, who had worked closely with the Hindus during the Khilafat-Congress concord, remained aloof from the political struggle for Muslim rights till 1937 or even later. Maulana Akram Khan, the President of the Bengal Khilafat Committee, remained with the Congress for many years and worked on the Committee to inquire into Chittagong Armoury Raid in 1931. Similarly, we see Ashraf-ud-Din Ahmad Choudhri (later a member of Nizam-i Islam Party and a minister in Abu Husain Sarkar's cabinet in East Pakistan in 1955–56) presiding over the Bengal Muslim Political Conference held on 21 April 1930 at Chittagong and urging co-operation with the Congress in Salt Satyagraha, launched by Mr Gandhi. He was a close associate of Subhash Chander Bose and was General Secretary of Bengal Provincial Congress Committee on the eve of the Partition. Faridpur district, which had a tradition of anti-British political activity since the

148. Ram Gopal, op. cit., p. 174.
149. Ibid., p. 167.
150. A.S.M. Abdur Rab, op. cit., p. 69.

days of the Faraizis, was, in June 1931, the venue of All-Bengal Nationalist Muslim Conference, with Dr Ansari as the President and Moazzam Husain Choudhri (better known as Lal Mian in Pakistan) as Chairman of the Reception Committee. Another veteran leader who took part in anti-British agitation was Maulvi Tamiz-ud-Din Khan who later became President of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly. He also came from Faridpur and spent fourteen months in jail during the Non-Co-operation Movement. Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, who later migrated to Assam and before the incorporation of Sylhet in Pakistan was President of the Provincial Muslim League of Assam, was also originally associated with the Khilafat movement in Bengal.

In the meanwhile, the constitutional struggle gained momentum, and Fazl-ul-Haq's attitude gradually hardened. In the Provincial Committee which was set up in 1927 to aid the Simon Commission, Muslim Bengal was represented by Sir Abdul Karim Ghaznavi, K.G.M. Faruqui, A.K. Fazl-ul-Haq and Maulvi Abul Kasim. Fazl-ul-Haq dissented from the views of other members who favoured establishment of an upper chamber in Bengal. We again find him representing Bengal, along with Sir Abdul Rahim and Sir Abdul Halim Ghaznavi. He took active part in the deliberations of the Round Table Conference where he delivered strong speeches in support of the demands of Bengal Muslims. In one[151] of these speeches he repudiated the Lucknow Pact as injurious to the interests of the Muslims of the Punjab and Bengal. (Mian Fazl-i Husain, who had favoured the Pact at one stage, had come to the same conclusion.) When the Hindus and the Muslims failed to come to an agreement at the Round Table Conference, the British Premier gave his Communal Award, under which the representation of Bengal Muslims, though not in accordance with the population and depending for its being effective on the support of European members of the Assembly, showed substantial improvement over their position under the Lucknow Pact. There were efforts to have this Award modified and, in 1933,

151. This important speech has been reproduced, *in extenso*, by A.S.M. Abdul Rab (op. cit., pp. 77–85).

Fazl-ul-Haq organised a number of meetings to resist the reopening of the Award.

Sir Abdul Rahim (1867–1948)

A leader whose work has not received adequate attention and who, probably, more than anyone else dominated the Muslim Bengal politics in the 'twenties was Sir Abdul Rahim. (The only other Muslim leader of prominence was Fazl-ul-Haq, but he had one foot firmly planted in the Krishak-Proja organisation, with occasional excursions to the Nationalist camp, and his position with regard to Muslim demands, though mindful of community's interests, was not so clear-cut or consistent.)

Abdul Rahim was born in 1867 in a prominent family of Midnapur district and had a brilliant educational career. He took his M.A. in English literature from the Calcutta University, standing "first among the first classes of the year". This enabled him to get Begum of Bhopal's foreign scholarship for Law and he proceeded for studies abroad. In England he specialised in Muhammadan Law, studying the original legal literature in Peran aisnd Arabic. On his return in 1890, he started legal practice and, in 1907, was appointed by the Calcutta University as Tagore Law Lecturer on Islamic Jurisprudence. The lectures which he delivered were published as *The Principles of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* in 1911 and provide a standard text-book on the subject.

In July 1908, Abdul Rahim had been appointed judge of Madras High Court and continued in this position for some twelve years. Twice he officiated as Chief Justice and distinguished himself for ability and independence. Side by side with his legal and judicial work Abdul Rahim maintained his interest in education, particularly of the Muslim community. In 1915, he was chosen to preside over the annual session of the Mohammadan Educational Conference. Next year he presided over the Nadwa-tul-Ulama.

Abdul Rahim had entered the political field even earlier and was a member of the famous Simla Deputation which waited on

Lord Minto on 1 October 1906 to urge the grant of Separate Electorates to the Muslims. His active political life was, however, interrupted by his elevation to the bench and he picked up the threads again only after his retirement. He returned to Bengal and became a member of the Governor's Executive Council (1920–25). Even in this position Sir Abdul Rahim was politically active and, according to the journal of the Servants of the India Society, Poona, he was "with Deshbandhu [C.R.Das], the joint author of the [Bengal Hindu-Muslim] Pact." [152] The Pact [153] provided that representation in legislature should be through joint electorates but on population basis. Muslim representation in services was also to be on population basis, with weightage for Muslims in new appointments till their quota was made up. It attracted a number of prominent Muslims including Dr Abdullah al-Mamun Suhrawardy and Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy to the Swarajist Party of C.R. Das, but very few Hindus had the vision of that statesman. The Pact, which was concluded on 27 December 1923, was severely criticised by the Hindus when its terms were puplished, and, although it was endorsed by the Bengal Provincial Conference at Sirajganj on 3 June 1924, it was sidetracked at the Cocanada Session of the All-India National Congress. With the death of C.R. Das in June 1925 the Pact also became a dead letter and the Muslim members of the Swarajist Party drifted away. Dr Abdullah al-Mamun Suhrawardy, who was a prominent member of the Party and was its candidate for the Presidentship of the Bengal Legislative Council, resigned from the Swarajist Party in August 1925. It was, however, left to Sir Abdul Rahim who was elected to Bengal Legislative Assembly in 1925 to start the Bengal Muslim Party in the Assembly. This was established in the middle of April 1926, and advocated Muslim representation in the Bengal Legislature in proportion to population through Separate Electorates. Sir Abdul Rahim worked hard for the success of the Bengal

152. *The Servants of India,* Poona, 24 June 1926, as reported in *Indian Quarterly Register*, 1926, I, 99-101.

153. Hemendranath Das Gupta, *Chittaranjan Das,* in "Builders of Modern India" series, p. 101.

Muslim Party whose efforts were opposed by the Congress, the new Swarajists and other Hindus by creating dissension amongst the Muslims.

Sir Abdul Rahim, however, continued to urge his point of view frankly and vigorously from all platforms. In 1925, he presided over the Aligarh Session of the All-India Muslim League and stated some home-truths with which later generations have become acquainted through the advocacy of the Two-Nation Theory during the struggle for Pakistan, but which created quite a sensation in the 'twenties. In the course of his Presidential Address, Sir Abdul Rahim said:

"The Hindus and Muslims are not two religious sects like the Protestants and Catholics of England, but form two distinct communities of peoples, and so they regard themselves. Their respective attitude towards life, distinctive culture, civilization and social habits, their traditions and history, no less than their religion, divide them so completely that the fact that they have lived in the same country for nearly 1,000 years has contributed hardly anything to their fusion into a nation. . . . Any of us Indian Muslims, travelling ... in Afghanistan, Persia, Central Asia, among Chinese Muslims, Arabs, and Turks would at once be made at home and would not find anything to which we are not accustomed. On the contrary in India we find ourselves in all social matters aliens when we cross the street and enter that part of the town where our fellow townsmen live." [154]

These home-truths, instead of awakening the Hindu leaders to the realities of the situation, made them bitterly hostile to Sir Abdul Rahim. In 1927, the Governor of Bengal offered him ministership, but no Hindu was prepared to work as his colleague. The Hindus sought to create dissensions in the Muslim ranks by coming to terms with A.K. Ghaznavi, who became the Muslim minister. Sir Abdul Rahim, however, continued to urge the Muslim point of view from other platforms. In 1928, he presided over the Bengal Muslim Conference, which denounced the Nehru Report and reiterated Muslim demands. He was active on other platforms also—in 1926, he again presided over the annual session of the All-India Mohammadan Educational Conference when, among other things, he advocated propagation of Urdu among all

154. Quoted in Abdul Hamid, *Muslim Separatism in India*, p. 180.

Muslims—but Bengal Muslim Conference became the main instrument of his political activity. In 1930, he again presided over the session of Bengal Muslim Conference and slashed the recommendations of the Simon Commission which had been so cool towards the Muslim demands.

In 1931, Sir Abdul Rahim was elected to the Central Legislative Assembly and, in the absence of Mr M.A. Jinnah who was in England in connection with the Round Table Conference, became the leader of the Independent Party. His active participation in politics came to an end when, on 24 January 1935, he was elected President of the Central Legislative Assembly. As guardian of the interests of all sections of the house, his position was semi-judicial. He, however, continued his interest in Muslim affairs, and, as Begum Shaistah Ikramullah says, "lunches at Sir Abdul Rahim's house were almost informal meetings of the Muslim League Working Committee".[155] We catch a glimpse of the vigorous manner in which Sir Abdul Rahim gave expression to the Muslim point of view even during his tenure as Speaker of the Assembly in *Essayez,* the reminiscences of Marquess of Zetland, who was Secretary of State for India from 1935 to 1940. In June 1939, the Viceroy had a talk with Sir Abdul Rahim "to sound him on the attitude of the Muslims towards the Federation". The Viceroy wrote about the views expressed by Sir Abdul Rahim in his letter dated 23 June addressed to the Secretary of State:

"I had not anticipated that he would be anything but very right wing; but, I was, I confess, a little surprised by the extreme communal vigour of his views and by the conviction with which he maintained that his co-religionists now stood, as he put it, with their backs to the wall and must fight."[156]

Zetland, who as Lord Ronaldshay had been Governor of Bengal from 1917 to 1922, himself made the following observations on Abdul Rahim's point of view:

"So far as Sir Abdul Rahim was concerned, I was not in the least surprised at 'the extreme communal vigour of his views'. I had known him well for more than a quarter of a century. He

155. Begum Shaista Ikramullah, *From Purdah to Parliament*, p. 115.
156. Marquess of Zetland, *Essayez*, p. 253.

had been a member of the Royal Commission on the Public Services in India on which I had served before the 1914 war, and he had been a member of my Executive Council in Bengal. I had always regarded him as a man of considerable culture and I had found him to be of moderate views in general; but I had long since discovered how strong were his feelings on the communal issue. And I had learned from a report on current events in the Punjab that he had astonished Sir H. Craik, the then Governor of the Province, by declaring that if he thought that Federation was imminent, he would advise his co-religionists to boycott it by refusing to return Muslim representatives to the Federal Legislature."[157]

Sir Abdul Rahim continued to hold the post of the Speaker until the Partition—i.e. his eightieth year—but his withdrawal from active politics during the previous thirteen years or so meant that he could take no part in the Pakistan Movement and the new genaration was hardly acquainted with his life and struggle for the Muslim rights. His death in Karachi at a ripe old age went almost unnoticed, but he has his place in the national history. His son-in-law, Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy, maintained—more adroitly and more successfully—the political objectives for which Sir Abdul Rahim worked so courageously in the 'twenties.

Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din (1894)

Meanwhile a new political figure was emerging in the Provincial Council. The Bengal Ministry had a chequered career and the dyarchy had to be suspended in the province four times owing to the inability of the non-official ministers to secure a vote of confidence in the provincial legislature and the reluctance of Congress and pro-Congress groups to let any ministry function. This position was quite different from the Punjab where dyarchy had functioned without a break and had strengthened the Muslim position. In Bengal, the first stable ministry was formed in December 1929, when Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din was, for the first time, included in the cabinet (along with Khan Bahadur K.G.M. Faruqui and a Hindu minister). Thereafter the dyarchy

157. Ibid., p. 254.

followed a steady course in Bengal. Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din continued in the cabinet, first as a Minister (1929–1934) and later as an Executive Councillor, till the formation of government under the new Act in 1937. He belonged to the family of Dacca Nawabs, and was the son of Nawab Salim Ullah Khan's sister. He was born on 19 July 1894, and was educated at M.A.O. College, Aligarh, and Trinity Hall, Cambridge. On his return from England, the started taking active interest in civic and political affairs. He was Chairman of Dacca Municipality from 1922 to 1929 and also served on the Executive Council of Dacca University.

He was a member of the Bengal Legislative Council from 1924 and became the provincial Education Minister in 1929. In this capacity he was responsible for successfully piloting the Bengal Rural Primary Education Bill in 1930. It involved some additional taxation and setting up of a provincial Board to control the primary education, and was vehemently opposed by Hindu members. Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din's Hindu colleague, who held the portfolio of Local Self-Government, resigned on the plea that the Bill was sought to be passed on communal lines. Nazim-ud-Din made "a fighting speech" repudiating the suggestion that a communal issue was involved and alleging that there was "a strong group of influential members in the House opposed to the Bill who challenged me, threatened me and even made tempting offers guaranteeing the Ministry from all attacks". The Bill was passed on 25 August 1930, when the majority of the elected Hindu members had walked out.

Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din continued as Education Minister till 1934, and thereafter he became an Executive Councillor. In that capacity he piloted two important bills designed to improve the lot of Bengal peasantry—the Agricultural Debtors' Bill and the Bengal Rural Development Bill. Referring to Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din, Sir Robert Reid, who later became Governor of Assam and held charge of Bengal for brief intervals, says: "Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin. . . . An attractive character, he brought to the Council a steady level-headed outlook, though in time he became more communally-minded, as was inevitable."[158] Elsewhere, he

158. *Years of Change: Bengal and Assam*, p. 77.

calls him "a moderating influence".[159]

Fazl-ul-Haq, who had not been associated with the Bengal Government after 1924, continued to practise at Calcutta. He had a large number of Hindu friends, and in many periods during his long public career he joined hands with the Congress and Hindu groups in provincial or municipal politics. In 1935–36, he was the first Muslim Mayor of Calcutta. When elections were held under the Government of India Act of 1935, he organised a Krishak-Proja (Peasant-Tenant) Party with a full-blooded radical programme of economic reconstruction of the province, abolition of Zamindari and measures for removal of political discontent, through release of detenues, internees and political prisoners. Possibly, he wished to adopt, with modifications necessary for Bengal, the policy adopted by Fazl-i Husain in the Punjab. Even otherwise, his interest in the rural masses was genuine, and he was not closely associated with the big landlords with whom Fazl-i-Husain joined hands in the Punjab. With his Krishak-Proja Party whose candidates included Abu Husain Sarkar, Yusuf Ali Chowdhury (Mohan Mian), Humayun Kabir, Syed Nusher Ali, Shams-ud-Din Ahmad, Khan Bahadur Fazl-ul-Karim, Maulana Shamsul Huda, Ashraf-ud-Din Ahmad Chowdhury and Khan Bahadur Hashim Ali Khan, Fazl-ul-Haq undertook in 1936 to oppose the Muslim League party. The latter group had started as the United Muslim Party with Nawab Khwajah Habib Ullah of Dacca as its leader, and Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy as "the driving force," but, according to Hasan Ispahani, decided to merge with the Muslim League, owing to the success of a "plan"[160] evolved by him and Khwajah Noor-ud-Din, the founder of *The Morning News*. Fazl-ul-Haq achieved considerable success. He defeated, in a straight fight, Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din by a big margin of about 10,000 votes. The results of the provincial elections displayed an old trend of Bengal politics noticed even by the Simon Commission—the emergence of several small discordant parties and groups instead of the overwhelming success of one party. In the Bengal

159. Ibid., p. 120.

160. For details see M.A.H. Ispahani, op. cit., pp. 25–30.

Assembly of 1937, the Congress had gained 60 seats, including 17 for the scheduled castes, the Muslim League gained 40, the Krishak-Proja Party obtained 35. There were 25 Europeans, 41 independent Muslims, 23 independent scheduled caste members, and 14 independent caste Hindus. With this composition of the Assembly, only a coalition cabinet could provide a stable government.

Coalition Cabinet (1937–1941). Accordingly, a coalition ministry came into office with representatives of the Krishak-Proja Party, the Muslim League and some Hindus. Fazl-ul-Haq became the Chief Minister on 1 April 1937 and continued to hold this position (at the head of two different coalitions) for almost six years. On the formation of the first coalition, the relationship between the Krishak-Proja Party and the Muslim League improved, and Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din, who was elected from a seat vacated by H.S. Suhrawardy,[161] became the Home Minister. When the Congress refused to take genuine Muslim representatives in Provincial Governments, and there was widespread dissatisfaction amongst Muslims, Fazl-ul-Haq attended the Lucknow session of the All-India Muslim League (September 1937) and announced, like Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan and Sir Saad Ullah of Assam, that members belonging to his Party would join the Muslim League. Thereafter, he toured extensively within and beyond the province in support of the League. The four and a half years of Fazl-ul-Haq's chief ministership in the League-Krishak-Proja Party Coalition form the high water-mark of his career as well as of Muslim political power in modern undivided Bengal. The coalition cabinet included all the stalwarts of Muslim Bengal—Fazl-ul-Haq, Nazim-ud-Din and Suhrawardy.

With regard to the new spirit which was generated in Muslim Bengal during the heyday of first Fazl-ul-Haq ministry (1937–1941), a recent writer says:

"The Muslim Bengal cabinet raised high hopes among the common man and Muslims became confident and sure of themselves. They began to lose their inferiority complex and looked upon Hindus as equals. The speeches and retorts in the Assembly

161. A.S.M. Abdur Rab, op. cit., p. 89.

delivered by A.K. Fazl-ul-Haq and Suhrawardy were superior to those of the great Hindu leaders of Congress and Mahasabha. By their vigour and knowledge, their sharpness and intelligence, their oratorical power and organisational ability, by their hard work and calibre, they built up their supremacy over the Hindu members in the House."

The new life amongst the Muslims was not confined to the Assembly chamber. It was visible in all fields of human activity—political organisation, literature, art, journalism, even sports.[162] The Muslim League was becoming a powerful living organisation and infused a new life and confidence in the community. The appearance of Kazi Nazrul on the literary horizon marked the end of an era in Bengali literature which had been dominated by the Hindus for nearly a century. And he was not alone. Poets Jasim-ud-Din and Ghulam Mustafa, representing different traditions, were other noteworthy poets of the day. In the field of fine arts, Zain-ul-Abidin shot into prominence with his masterly pictures of the Bengal famine. In music, Abbas-ud-Din Ahmad, a singer with a very melodious voice, went all over Bengal popularising Murshidi, Marfati and Bhatiali songs. Things Islamic which were considered taboo at one time gained acceptance among all classes of the population and songs of the rural area, mostly Islamic in content, began to appeal even to sophisticated audiences.[163] In the field of sports, a new day dawned, when the Muhammadan Sporting Club began to defeat the redoubtable Mohan Bagan and the European football teams.

The rise of the new Muslim press contributed to this renaissance. Calcutta had had some important Muslim journals even during the nineteenth century, but they were weeklies or monthlies, and represented small sections of the community. In 1936,

162. Something like this which was manifest in the Punjab in the mid-twenties—with Iqbal the poet, Abdul Rahman Chughtai the artist, Mian Fazl-i Husain the dominant politician, *The Muslim Outlook* and the *Inqilab* (in addition to the *Zamindar*) in journalism, Lal Shah Bukhari in hockey and Hameed Tuti in athletics.

163. Taken from a speech of N.M. Khan, formerly of the Civil Service of Pakistan.

the daily *Azad* was started by Maulana Akram Khan,[164] a veteran Khilafat leader who was publishing the journal *Muhammadi* in Bengali and had, at one time, published the daily *Zamanah* in Urdu. *The Star of India* had been started by A.K. Ghaznavi and *The Morning News*, which later became daily, by Khwajah Noor-ud-Din. Altaf Husain who was chosen by the Quaid-i Azam to edit *Dawn*, the mouthpiece of the All-India Muslim League during the struggle for Pakistan, was, at that time, an officer of the Education Department, but he was making regular pseudonymous contributions to *The Statesman* which attracted attention on account of their vigour and pungency.

In the Coalition Ministry, Fazl-ul-Haq himself took up the Education portfolio. He had early realised that education was the key to the uplift of the Muslim community and his two life-interests were education and welfare of rural masses. Even when he was briefly the Minister for Education in 1924, he had created a separate Directorate for Muslim Education in Bengal and appointed Khan Bahadur Ahsanullah as the Additional Director of Public Instruction to look after the work. He also tried to help the establishment of the Islamia College, Calcutta, which in later years was to provide so many workers for the Pakistan Movement, and created Muslim Educational Fund for grant

164. Maulana Akram Khan, who entered the hundredth year of his life on 7 June 1968, deserves a separate section to himself on account of his journalistic, literary, political and religious activities. He was born in 1869 in the village Hakimpur of 24-Parganas District near Calcutta. In 1905 (?) the *Muhammadi* was started by Haji Abdullah, a Bihari business man of Calcutta, and Maulana became its editor. It began as a monthly and in course of time became a weekly. Maulana Akram Khan, who later became the proprietor of the *Muhammadi* also, followed a pan-Islamist, pro-Ulama policy. He was the Secretary of Anjuman-i Ulama-i Islam Bengala, which was set up in 1913, started a monthly *Islam* (in 1916?) and established some fifty *maktabs*. During the Non-Co-operation Movement, two dailies—*Savik* in Bengali and *Zamanah* in Urdu—were published from the office of the *Muhammadi*. These dailies were shortlived but in 1936, on the eve of elections, Maulana started the daily *Azad*, which gave powerful support to Fazl-ul-Haq's coalition ministry (1937–41) and after migration from Calcutta to Dacca was the premier Bengali daily of East Pakistan.

of scholarships to deserving Muslim students—but at that time his tenure was brief and his authority limited. In 1937, he was the Chief Minister and was entering on a long spell of high office. Now he could make a bigger contribution, and this may be seen by the number of new institutions which were meant to benefit the Muslims—Eden Girls College, Dacca, Lady Braborne (Girls) College, Calcutta, Agricultural College, Tezgaon (Dacca), Fazl-ul-Haq Muslim Hall, Dacca, Fazl-ul-Haq College, Chakur, Barisal. He even tried to clip the wings of the Calcutta University, which was a closed Hindu preserve, and, in fact, the principal instrument of Hindu renaissance and intellectual domination in Bengal. It was a huge, unwieldy organisation and controlled even Entrance and Intermediate Examinations. Thus its influence over higher education was much greater than that of the Education Minister and his department. An identical problem in the Punjab had been solved through the setting up of a Secondary Education Board, which was made responsible for conducting pre-graduation examinations. Fazl-ul-Haq thought that he could try the same remedy in Bengal but he was mistaken. His biographer says, "The entire Hindu community of Bengal, forgetting their party difference and jealousy, stood like a rock against the Secondary Education Bill. Bengal was never so much stirred after the Partition movement of 1905 as she was over this bill." A savant like Sir P.C. Roy presided over the Protest Conference which was held at Calcutta in December 1940 and was attended by about 10,000 delegates from all over Bengal. At that time Rabindranath Tagore was old and ailing, but even he lent the prestige of his name and support to the Protest Movement. The message which he sent to the Conference, ended with the words, "My age and health prevent me from taking part in public affairs, but the danger which menaces the cultural existence of our province has touched me profoundly and I cannot help sending these few words even from my sick-bed." There were other demonstrations also and Fazl-ul-Haq had to withdraw the bill. His government was more fortunate with the Calcutta Municipal Amendment Act which curtailed the power and

influence of the Calcutta Corporation.[165] Fazl-ul-Haq's government had many achievements in the rural sphere to its credit. It passed the Moneylenders' Act and Bengal Tenancy Amendment Act for the amelioration of the condition of the peasants and appointed the Floud Commission to examine the land revenue system and to report on the desirability or otherwise of the abolition of Zamindari. The Commission recommended the latter course and paved the way for this momentous step which was taken after Independence in East Pakistan and West Bengal.[166]

Not less important than these measures was the decision of the Coalition Government (taken on the lines of a similar decision of the Punjab Government) for reservation of 50% of vacancies in government service filled by direct recruitment, for Muslims.

From 1937 to 1941 Fazl-ul-Haq also took prominent part in Muslim League activities outside Bengal and moved the famous Lahore Resolution of 1940, but partly the personal rivalries within the province and partly his own temperament brought him in conflict with the Quaid-i Azam. The problem of the relationship between regional political parties and a national organisation is not an easy one in initial stages of political development. It is particularly difficult when the regional parties have contested elections and, as was the case in the Punjab and Bengal, come into power after defeating the nominees of the national organisation. So far as Fazl-ul-Haq was concerned, things came to a head on a comparatively minor point. In 1941, a Defence Council was formed by the Government of India, on which the League Premiers of Bengal, the Punjab and Assam were nominated. The Quaid-i Azam and the Working Committee of the Muslim League, who did not approve of a formal association of the League Premiers with the war effort at the national level without some

165. Presumably this measure was sponsored by Suhrawardy, who was Minister for Local Self-Government. The paragraphs above are based on Mr Abdul Rab's biography of Fazl-ul-Haq. Similar—but better documented and more objectively written—studies of Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din and Suhrawardy are overdue.

166. A Bill for abolition of Zamindari was moved by Suhrawardy during his chief ministership, but it lapsed with the Partition.

agreement with the Government on the League demands, asked the three Premiers to resign their seats. All of them complied with the resolution of the Working Committee but Fazl-ul-Haq did this under protest, and to show his annoyance resigned his membership of the League Working Committee. Fazl-ul-Haq's stand, however, was not shared by some of his colleagues—particularly Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din and Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy—and the Bengal Leaguers organised demonstrations against him. There was a temporary truce, but when the Legislature met again at the end of November 1941, it was learnt that a new "Progressive Coalition Party" had been formed. On this, the Muslim colleagues of Fazl-ul-Haq resigned. Thereafter, he accepted the leadership of the new party, while his opponents formed a new Muslim League party, with Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din as its head. On 12 December 1941, Fazl-ul-Haq formed a new Ministry in coalition with non-Muslim members. His cabinet included nine members, of whom five, including the Premier, were Muslims and four Hindus. Two Hindu members were from the Forward Bloc, one represented the scheduled castes and the fourth holding the key portfolio of Finance was Dr Shyamaprasad Mukerjee, a militant leader of Hindu Mahasabha, who later founded Jana Sangh. This was a singularly unfortunate step and has been, with justification, severely criticised by Hasan Ispahani. The defence offered by Fazl-ul-Haq's biographer (pp. 112, etc.) is hardly convincing. It has to be admitted that Fazl-ul-Haq, in spite of his great services and splendid gifts, was capable of very rash action at times. Fazl-ul-Haq's new ministry was able to command a majority in the Assembly, but the by-elections showed its total loss of support so far as the Bengal Muslims were concerned. Soon Dr Mukerjee got into difficulties with the Governor—largely on account of the action he wanted against N.M. Khan, District Magistrate of Midnapur[167]—and resigned in November 1942. This was a period of great anxiety as Japanese troops had reached very near the borders of Bengal and Fazl-ul-Haq had differences with the Governor over administrative measures necessary for war work. On 28 March 1943, he resigned.

167. A.S.M. Abdul Rab, op. cit., pp. 113–14.

When Fazl-ul-Haq came in open conflict with the Muslim League, he was expelled from the organisation on 11 December 1941, and a ban wae imposed on his re-admission. He, now, started a vigorous campaign against the League and the Quaid, and in the 1946 elections his Krishak-Proja Party opposed the Muslim League. He himself was elected from two constituencies, but all his prominent followers, like Abu Husain Sarkar, Ashraf-ud-Din Ahmad Chowdhry and Humayun Kabir, were defeated and the party could win only four seats. In September 1946, Fazl-ul-Haq applied for re-admission in the Muslim League, assuring complete adherence to its discipline, and the Quaid-i Azam, who never harboured personal grudge and must have been mindful of Fazl-ul-Haq's past services, lifted the ban on 8 September 1946. When Maulana Akram Khan resigned the presidentship of the Provincial Muslim League shortly after this, Fazl-ul-Haq offered himself as a candidate—in opposition to Abul Hashem—but the Maulana withdrew his resignation. After the Partition, Fazl-ul-Haq stayed on in Calcutta for some years and after his migration to East Pakistan was appointed Advocate-General. He, later, resigned this post to take part in active politics and was one of the three principal leaders of the Jugto Front which signally defeated the Muslim League in 1954. These developments, however, relate to the period which is not dealt with in this volume.

After Fazl-ul-Haq's resignation as chief minister, Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din, who had been Leader of Opposition from 1941 to 1943, formed a Ministry on 24 April 1943. Other prominent Muslim members of the Cabinet were Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy, the Finance Minister, Maulvi Tamiz-ud-Din Khan, the Education Minister, and Khwajah Shahab-ud-Din. The parliamentary secretaries who gained prominence later included Muhammad Ali of Bogra (later Prime Minister of Pakistan), Fazlur Rahman (later Education Minister, Government of Pakistan) and Tafazzal Ali (later a Minister in Pakistan).

Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy (1893)

A Government headed by a staunch Muslim Leaguer was

firmly in the saddle in Bengal by the end of April 1943. When elections, which were to decide the fate of the subcontinent, were held at the end of 1945, the Muslim League vastly improved its position and won 113 out of 119 Muslim seats. This success was due to the general popularity of the Muslim League, but the great organising ability of Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy, who had emerged as the strong man of Nazim-ud-Din Cabinet, was also an important factor. It did not, therefore, surprise anyone when the parliamentary party elected, as its leader, Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy instead of Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din.

The new Premier, who presided over the destinies of Bengal during a fateful period, belonged to a family which has produced many public men of note. His maternal grandfather was the well-known educationist and poet, Maulana Ubaid Ullah Ubaidi Suhrawardy (1834–1886), who was a friend of Syed Ahmad Khan and was, for many years, Superintendent of the Dacca Madrasah, where he was buried after his death. Other prominent members of the family were Ubaidi's daughter (and Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy's mother), Khujistah Akhtar Banu Begum, a well-known Urdu writer and a pioneer in girls' education, and Ubaidi's two sons, Sir Abdullah Suhrawardy and Sir Hasan Suhrawardy.

(Sir) Abdullah al-Mamun Suhrawardy (1882–1935) was among those young men who, during their student days in England, organised the Pan-Islamic Society at London. He was its first Secretary. In 1905, he brought out a beautiful little book, *The Sayings of Muhammad*, which has been republished in "The Wisdom of the East" Series. After return from England, he acted as Principal of the Islamia College, Lahore, but later returned to Bengal. He joined the Calcutta University as Professor and Examiner of Law and Arabic. He also took part in politics and was, at one time or another, member of the Bengal Legislative Council or the Central Legislative Assembly. His important political contribution was the Note of Dissent which he wrote in 1928—along with Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan of Lahore—as member of the Indian Central Committee appointed to assist the Simon Commission. He belonged to what Ram Gopal calls "the Lahore School of the Muslim League" and in his Note of Dissent vigorously urged the

case for safeguarding the interests of Muslims as a separate entity. In his Note, he also "evinced interest in seeking statutory provision for separate representation for the depressed classes in the Legislature". Dr Abdullah Suhrawardy died on 14 January 1935.

Shaheed's father (Zuhad Rahim Zahid, later known as Zahid Suhrawardy) had quite a chequered career. After passing his M.A., LL.B. from Calcutta University, he started legal practice, first as Pleader in the District Court of 24-Parganas and later as Vakil of the Calcutta High Court. Quite late in life (according to one account, at the time when his sons Shahid and Shaheed went abroad for higher studies) he went to England to qualify for the bar. He passed the examination with distinction, winning many prizes. On return he commenced practice in the Calcutta High Court, and was very successful. Later, he was appointed judge of the Calcutta High Court, and was knighted on his retirement from the bench. He died in 1949.

Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy was born at Midnapur in 1893, and was educated at Calcutta Madrasah, St Xavier College, and Oxford University. He began public life by his election to the Calcutta Corporation, where his ability attracted the attention of the political bosses. He entered politics on the side of the Swarajist leader C.R. Das, and was Deputy Mayor of Calcutta Corporation when C.R. Das was the Mayor. Apart from his gifts as an able orator, he prepared a solid base for his political work by organising Bengal National Chamber of Labour, and gaining the support of a major portion of Calcutta labour. He entered Bengal Legislative Council in 1924 after the Swarajists had adopted the Council-entry programme. When C.R. Das was disowned by the Hindus and Hindu-Muslim relations deteriorated, Shaheed drifted away from the Swarajist party. Forthright and hard-hitting as ever, he now vigorously put forward the Muslim point of view. When at the meeting of the Khilafat Committee held at Calcutta in December 1928, the "Bengal Group led by Maulana Akram Khan, Ashrafuddin Choudhri and Fazl ul Haq, were in favour of compromise with the Congress, while the new Khilafat Committee of Calcutta, with Shaheed Suhrawardy leading it, was against any compromise with the Congress on the reservation for the

majority in respect of Punjab Muslims."[168]

Suhrawardy had been attracted to the Khilafat movement under the influence of his maternal uncle, Abdullah al-Mamun Suhrawardy, who had organised—with Iqbal and others—the Pan-Islamic Society in London in 1905. He became the Secretary of the Calcutta (Bengal) Khilafat Committee and used the organisation as a platform for mobilising public opinion in support of the Muslim point of view to which his uncle had given expression in his Note of Dissent, and which his father-in-law, Sir Abdul Rahim, had eloquently put forth in his Presidential Address to the All-India Muslim League in 1925. In August 1930,[169] Shaheed Suhrawardy was Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Calcutta Khilafat Conference, which was presided over by Maulana Shaukat Ali. Shaheed's printed address is a detailed criticism of the failure of Simon Commission to appreciate the Muslim point of view in framing its recommendations and contained an exhortation to the people to see that the Muslim demands "are pressed with all the power of the Muslim Community behind them at the Round Table Conference".

Suhrawardy had started mobilising Muslim public opinion even earlier, but for this his principal platform was the Bengal Muslim Conference. This Conference met as the Bengal Muslim All-Parties Conference on 23 December 1928. Suhrawardy was the Chairman of the Reception Committee and his address was a detailed criticism of the Nehru Report. The library of the Research Society of Pakistan (University of the Punjab) contains two other printed addresses, delivered by Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy as Chairman of the Reception Committee. They were delivered at the All-Bengal Muslim Conference held on 16 and 17 May 1931 and at Bengal Muslim Conference held on 9 and 10 July 1932, respectively. The presidents of the different sessions of Bengal Muslim Conference (held with a slight variation of nomenclature[170])

168. Choudhry Khaliquzzaman, op. cit., p. 97.

169. *Vide* the Urdu version of "Suhrawardy's Memoirs," *Jang*, Karachi, 13 December 1965, p. 2.

170. A Bengal Muslim Conference was held on 9 and 10 August 1930, to express the views of Bengali Muslims on the recommendations of the

varied—Sir Abdul Rahim presided in 1928, while Maulana Shaukat Ali was the President in 1931—but on all the three occasions—1928, 1931 and 1932—Suhrawardy was the Chairman of the Reception Committee. The history of Bengal Muslim Conference has not been written, but a study of the material available leaves no doubt that Suhrawardy was its moving force and that the role of this Conference at this crucial juncture in mobilising Muslim opinion in Bengal and in applying pressure on the Muslim delegates from Bengal to the Round Table Conference must have contributed to the large increase in representation (from 40% under Lucknow Pact) allowed to Bengal Muslims under the Communal Award.

Suhrawardy's address at the Conference of 1931 shows that he was feeling the need for a permanent, living political organisation. The last paragraph of his address began with the words:

"Now let us look to ourselves. Unfortunately, although the Mussalmans [in Bengal] outnumber the Hindus, we have no political organisation worth the name. Efforts have been made to establish some and all honour to those who have done so ; but it is absolutely essential that we must have a political organisation which can run parallel to the Congress, far-flung, and which can look after the interests of the Mussalmans. We must have an organisation that acts, not merely one that sleeps ; an organisation with active men, not merely one which depends for its existence on circulars."

Suhrawardy got a chance to build such an organisation in 1936. At this time a United Muslim Party had been set up to fight the coming elections, of which, according to Ispahani, "Suhrawardy was the driving force". This Party merged in the Muslim League, and ultimately Suhrawardy became the Secretary[171] of the Bengal branch of the League. He kept this position for several years and worked fruitfully to give the Muslims of the province a living political organisation.

Simon Commission. Abul Barakat Abdul Rauf Danapuri was Chairman of the Reception Committee. In his address he stated that on the publication of the Simon Commission Report, both A.K. Fazl-ul-Haq and Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy—separately—thought of holding this Conference.

171. "Suhrawardy's Memoirs," *Jang*, Karachi, 20 December 1965, p. 2.

In his address before the Bengal Muslim Conference, 1932, Suhrawardy had, while emphasising that "there are two cultural entities existing in India of which there does not seem to be any possible chance of fusion in the near future," pleaded for Hindu-Muslim co-operation, but the antagonism which his efforts at the organisation of Bengal Muslims aroused—as also the tempers of some Hindu members of the Bengal Council—may be judged from the remarks made by J.K. Basu regarding Suhrawardy in a Council debate in 1932: "Take the loathsome reptile away! Stamp upon it and crush its head!"[172]

Shaheed Suhrawardy's first association with the provincial government was as Minister of Civil Supplies in Nazim-ud-Din's cabinet which took office in April 1943. After this, his rise to political power was rapid. A brilliant speaker and a capable organiser, he had great influence with the Calcutta Muslims and, as secretary of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League, he was able to strengthen his position in the whole province. His way was smoothened by the good sense of Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din, who, instead of competing or intriguing for power in 1945, kept aloof, and in fact left Bengal "for Delhi to be away from the scene".[173] Other prominent members of Suhrawardy's cabinet, formed in 1946, were Khan Bahadur Muhammad Ali (of Bogra), and Fazlur Rahman, who were in charge of Finance and Land Revenue, respectively. The Speaker of the Bengal Assembly was Khan Bahadur Nur-ul-Amin, who later became Chief Minister of East Bengal (Pakistan). With the exception of Muhammad Ali of Bogra, these gentlemen left Suhrawardy's camp in less than a year. Choudhry Khaliquzzaman writes:

"About the third week of March [1947] three Bengal leaders, Nurul Amin, Hameed ul Haq Chaudhri and Fazlur Rahman came to see me in Delhi and informed me that they had decided to move a motion of 'no confidence' against Shaheed Suhrawardy, for which they had already secured support of over seventy Muslim members of the Bengal Assembly. I was horrified at this news. . . . Later on Mr. Jinnah asked me to proceed to Bengal at

172. *The Indian Annual Register*, 1932, I, 219.

173. For details, see Choudhry Khaliquzzaman, op. cit., p. 336.

once to settle matters there." [174]

Choudhry Khaliquzzaman, accordingly, left for Calcutta, held a meeting in the Chief Minister's office, where all concerned were present, and informed the dissident members that owing to the imminence of major constitutional changes, "the Central League could not agree to allow them to table a 'no confidence motion'." The move was dropped for the time being, but later these three leaders were to become important members of Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din's party, and must have played an important role when Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din and not Suhrawardy was elected leader of the Muslim League Party of East Bengal in August 1947.

Under the 3 June Plan which was accepted by the League and the Congress, provision was made for division of Bengal into Muslim and non-Muslim majority areas. Before long it became obvious that Calcutta was likely to go to India and Bengal Muslims would be left with the area which, at the Governors' Conference convened by Mountbatten, Tyson, who represented the Governor of Bengal, called a "rural slum". At this time Suhrawardy, along with a few others, put forward a scheme for "United Bengal". It was opposed by the Hindu Mahasabha as well as Nehru and Patel, and was ultimately abandoned. Suhrawardy has, however, been severely criticised by M.A.H. Ispahani[175] for sponsoring an idea "which ran counter to the Muslim League's notion of Pakistan" and for falling into "a clever trap laid by the wily Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha". Ispahani has refused to accept Suhrawardy's assertion "that it was with the Quaid's knowledge and permission that he conducted negotiations with Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose of Bengal" and says that to his knowledge "this contention is not supported by anything on record anywhere".[176] Ispahani has dwelt on the subject at length but there

174. Ibid., p. 379. Sniping at Suhrawardy by Maulana Akram Khan had started much earlier. On 13 November 1946, he issued a statement alleging that the responsibility for Bihar tragedy lay on "Muslim League government of Bengal, which was a personal show of Mr. Suhrawardy" (*The Indian Annual Register*, 1946, Vol. II).

175. M.A.H. Ispahani, op. cit., p. 216.

176. Ibid.

is no doubt that he did not have access even to the relevant printed material and his version is difficult to endorse. For one thing, the move for the United Bengal was, apparently, not a trap laid by the Hindu Mahasabha or the Congress. Dr Shyamaprasad Mukerjee, the Hindu Mahasabha leader, "was stoutly opposed to the whole idea of a sovereign Bengal State."[177] In fact, according to Pyarelal, who was Gandhi's Private Secretary, Shyamaprasad "had demanded *division of Bengal even in an undivided India*."[178] So far as the Congress was concerned, Gandhi was prepared to consider the proposal on certain conditions, but in the middle of 1947 the two persons who counted in the Congress were Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel. "Both of them," according to Gandhi's letter dated 8 June 1947, were "dead against the proposal" and were of opinion that it was "merely a trick for dividing Hindus and Scheduled Caste leaders."[179] Full data on the subject may be available in the Quaid's papers, but, apparently, he was aware of the discussions and did not object to them. According to Pyarelal:

> "Jinnah was prepared to entertain the idea of constituting a sovereign Bengal outside both India and Pakistan, if this would give him in return the whole of the Punjab but not if the Punjab was to be partitioned anyway, as envisaged under Mountbatten's draft plan, and certainly not if this entitled conceding sovereignty to the Frontier Province."[180]

Suhrawardy's contention about the Quaid being in the picture finds further support from a letter addressed to the Quaid by Sarat Bose in continuation of their earlier conversation on the subject, which appears in *The Indian Annual Register*, 1947 (I, 112).

Besides, according to the contemporary data which are available in Pyarelal's book, it appears that a large number of important Muslim leaders of Bengal were associated with Suhrawardy in an exploration of the proposal. His most active collaborator in this move was Abul Hashem, Secretary of Bengal Provincial Muslim League, and later Director of Islamic Academy, Dacca,

177. Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi : The Last Phase*, I, 183.
178. Ibid. 179. Ibid., I, 187. 180. Ibid.

but many others were also in the picture. On 11 May, Suhrawardy, accompanied by his Minister for Finance, Muhammad Ali Bogra (later Prime Minister of Pakistan), and Abul Hashem discussed the question with Gandhi.[181] On 13 May, Dr Shyamaprasad saw Gandhi and opposed the move. Discussions of Muslim leaders with Sarat Chandra Bose, however, continued. On 23 May, Bose reported to Gandhi, "Last Tuesday evening [20 May] there was a conference at my house which was attended by Suhrawardy, Fazlur Rahman (Minister) [later Education Minister, Pakistan], Muhammad Ali [of Bogra] (Minister), Abul Hashem (Secretary, Bengal Provincial Muslim League, now on leave), Abdul Malek (Member, Bengal Legislative Assembly representing labour) [later Labour Minister in Pakistan]" and some Hindu leaders, when a tentative agreement was drafted.[182] This draft agreement or what he calls the "amended clauses of the draft agreement between Sarat Chander Bose and members of the Muslim League" has been published by Pyarelal. The important provisions are:

"(1) Bengal will be a Free State. The Free State of Bengal will decide its relations with the rest of India. The question of joining any Union will be decided by the Legislature of the Free State of Bengal by a two-third majority.

"(2) The constitution of the Free State of Bengal will provide for election to the Bengal Legislature on the basis of joint electorate and adult franchise with reservation of seats proportionate to the population amongst Hindus and Muslims. . . ."[183]

It was left to "Shaheed and Fazlur Rahman to discuss the terms with Jinnah and his Working Committee."[184]

Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din was no longer in Bengal government and his name is not included among those mentioned by Sarat Chandra Bose in his letter to Gandhi, but it appears that, at least till 22 April 1947, he favoured "an independent sovereign Bengal". A recent publication, quoting from *Indian Annual Register,* Part I, 1947, says:

"On April 22, 1947, Sir Nazimuddin said, 'It is my considered opinion that an independent sovereign Bengal is in the best interest of its people, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, and I am

181. Ibid., I, 182.
182. Ibid., I, 185.
183. Ibid., II, 826.
184. Ibid., I, 186.

equally certain that the partition of Bengal is fatal to the Bengalis as such.' "[185]

As has been stated earlier, all the relevant data—e.g. what is contained in the Quaid's papers—are not yet available, and any account of events can, at this stage, be only tentative. If in these circumstances, the present writer may venture a suggestion, it would be for a fuller exploration of the role of the Governor and European commercial community of Calcutta with regard to the proposal for an undivided Bengal. At this time, Lt.-General Sir Francis Tuker was G.O.C. Eastern Command and was stationed at Calcutta. Writing about the proposed division of Bengal and the Punjab, he says: "In Bengal we hoped that an arrangement could be reached whereby both Muslims and Hindus would be able to use freely the port of Calcutta." [186] In this sentence he is obviously referring to the efforts which were made to make the port of Calcutta available to East Bengal and to which Hugh Tinker has also referred in his book *Experiment with Freedom*. Tinker, giving examples of the way in which Sardar Patel was taking major decisions without reference to his colleagues, says:

"As one example: it was virtually certain that Calcutta would fall in Hindustan, but most of the hinterland would go to Pakistan. It was suggested that if Pakistan had access to Calcutta's facilities, concessions might be extracted in exchange, which would lessen the barriers of partition. An emissary was sent to Patel, to propose that Calcutta should be placed under joint control for six months. With notable economy of words, the Sardar dismissed the project: 'Not even for six hours.' "[187]

Tinker has not given the name of the "emissary" who was sent to Patel and it is not clear from the passive construction of his crucial sentence—"It was suggested"—as to who exactly made the suggestion. General Tuker uses the expression "We," while expressing the hope about the Calcutta port being available to East Bengal. Taking the two references—especially Tuker's "We"—together it does not appear unreasonable to infer that these inquiries and suggestions were, most probably, made by the

185. Kamruddin Ahmad, *Social History of East Pakistan* (1st edn.), p. 85.
186. Sir Francis Tuker, *While Memory Serves*, p. 277.
187. Hugh Tinker, *Experiment with Freedom : India and Pakistan*, p. 128.

leaders of the European (commercial) community, which was not only important in business but also held a key position in the Bengal legislature, having received a heavy weightage. Even if the inquiries and suggestions were not directly made by the European representatives or officers, at least the suggestion may well have been made (to the Indian politicians) from that quarter. It is known that the powerful European commercial community of Calcutta was vitally interested in keeping Bengal undivided. Their major interest was JUTE, which was grown in East Bengal but was processed in and shipped from West Bengal. It seems, therefore, fair to infer that the proposal for an undivided Bengal may well have been suggested by the European representatives with the blessings of the Governor. It is relevant to note that General Tuker explicitly writes about the proposal for an undivided Bengal: "The Governor of Bengal also smiled upon the project."[188] This official support would also explain why all prominent Muslim leaders, including Sir Nazim-ud-Din, at one stage at least, favoured the project of undivided Bengal.

The discussions regarding undivided Bengal did not lead anywhere. Suhrawardy and the local Muslim League leaders did not agree to a "stipulation"[189] made by Gandhi. Assam also "took fright"[190] and the Assam Provincial Congress Committee strongly objected to the proposal. The move was formally disowned by the Bengal Provincial Muslim League and the Congress on 28 May, and was killed by the 3 June Plan, but apparently Sarat Bose was still hoping to get the Quaid's blessing and wrote to him on 9 June adding that the request he was making was "in accordance with the views expressed by you [Quaid] when we met."[191]

As stated earlier, information on the negotiations regarding United Bengal is not yet complete, but from the above it seems fair to infer that there is enough "on record" to show that not only was the Quaid-i Azam in the picture about the negotiations, but that many other leaders, like Fazlur Rahman (later Education

188. Sir Francis Tuker, op. cit., 278.
189. Ibid., p. 186.
190. Ibid.
191. Ibid., p. 190.

Minister, Government of Pakistan) actively participated in them. In fact, Maulana Raghib Ahsan has stated in a pamphlet that "Mr. Fazlur Rahman was the first to sign the Statement in support of the Draft Agreement of Undivided Bengal Scheme" and that "21 members of the Working Committee of the Bengal League out of 27 had supported the Plan".[192]

Ispahani has added much to our knowledge regarding the pre-Partition situation in Bengal, but his account of another episode concerning Suhrawardy needs to be supplemented. He had, at least, one serious grievance against Suhrawardy (we shall deal with it later), but he says that notwithstanding this he tried to help him after the Partition. He states that in August 1947 at a dinner given by Sir Ghulam Husain Hidayatullah at Karachi, Suhrawardy took Ispahani aside and complained that after all his "years of service to the Muslims he was now out of everything and had to look for some sort of employment to keep himself active."[193] A day or two later Ispahani spoke to the Quaid, who, after thinking for a while, offered to send Suhrawardy out as his "Personal Representative to the Muslim and Middle Eastern countries to explain Pakistan". Ispahani suggested that Suhrawardy's services "should be utilised in the country" and thought that with Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din's consent it should be possible to include him as one of Bengal's representatives in the Central Cabinet. The Quaid's reply—according to Ispahani—was "that it would not be possible right away but that after the dust of controversy and rivalry had settled down, which would take at least six months, he would be able to include Suhrawardy in his Cabinet". When Ispahani conveyed this to Suhrawardy in Calcutta in the third week of August, the latter insisted that "unless he was appointed Minister first, he would not leave the country on any mission". Ispahani "beseeched him not to be petty, to rise above self in the wider interest of the new nation" and to "accept without condition the Quaid's offer". Suhrawardy

192. Raghib Ahsan, M.A., *Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy and the Inner History of the United Bengal Scheme*, pp. 11 and 12.

193. M.A.H. Ispahani, op. cit., p. 115.

"point-blank refused" and added, "I have decided not to forsake my brother Muslims in Calcutta and to share their fate whatever it may be."[194] Ispahani suggested that Suhrawardy should take "one or two days to think over the matter" but his reply was categorcial: "I have made up my mind," and he refused to consider Ispahani's suggestion and warning. When the matter was conveyed to the Quaid sometime later, he shook his head and said, "That is finished. I am not prepared to accept terms and conditions from Suhrawardy."

There is no reason to doubt Ispahani's account of his conversations with Suhrawardy and the Quaid, but it is relevant to point out that not six months later but almost within a month, an important place in the Central cabinet was offered to Suhrawardy. Chaudhri Muhammad Ali says:

"In September, 1947, as the refugee problem grew to immense proportions, the Ministry of Refugee Rehabilitation was formed. H.S. Suhrawardy, former Chief Minister of Bengal, was offered the portfolio, but he declined it."[195]

As Chaudhri Muhammad Ali was Secretary-General to the Government of Pakistan at that time, his statement on the subject may be taken as authoritative. The fact is of some importance, as it is hardly likely that the Quaid would have offered Suhrawardy a seat in the Central Cabinet, if three months earlier he had been carying on negotiations regarding united, sovereign Bengal without the Quaid's knowledge and acquiscence.

Hasan Ispahani felt, at least, one serious grievance against the former Chief Minister of Bengal—relating to mayoralty of Calcutta, for the year commencing 1 April 1946. He was a former Deputy Mayor and, according to his own account, had been nominated by the Muslim League Party in Calcutta Corporation, for mayoralty. After Ispahani had left Calcutta for Delhi to attend some important meeting of the Working Committee of All-India Muslim League, he complains that Suhrawardy called a meeting of the (Muslim) Councillors of the Corporation and had the earlier decision reversed, in the words of Ispahani, "in favour

194. Ibid., p. 116.
195. Chaudhri Muhammad Ali, op. cit., p. 241.

of an unknown schoolmaster of Zakariya Street, called [*sic*] Mohammad Osman, a Bihari by origin."[196] Ispahani was "distressed" but he says that he accepted the new decision engineered by Suhrawardy "for reasons of his own leadership" without "argument or rancour". Next year, Suhrawardy suffered a similar fate. After his eventful tenure as Chief Minister of Bengal he was passed over in favour of Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din for the leadership of Muslim League Party in the Muslim majority area of Bengal. Originally, Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din had headed the Cabinet of which Suhrawardy was a member and had later occupied an important position as deputy leader of the Muslim League Party in the Central Legislature. *Prima facie*, there was nothing so surprising in his return to leadership, especially in East Bengal with which he and his family had much closer contacts than Suhrawardy. This change of leadership has, however, been a case of misunderstanding in East Pakistan and the subject needs a somewhat adequate treatment. A.S.M. Abdur Rab in his biography of Fazl-ul-Haq says about Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din:

"When the election of a new leader of the League Parliamentary Party was necessary due to partition, he put forward his candidature and was actively backed by League High Command. Mighty Suhrawardy who laid the foundation of Pakistan by his overwhelming victory in the polls of 1946 was defeated."[197]

He has made some serious allegations against the new governments of East Bengal and Pakistan, including their alleged failure to press for retention of Calcutta in Pakistan. He has even attributed partisan motives for this alleged failure. He says:

"Why did the new Government of Pakistan and East Bengal give up claims to one of the greatest cities of the world? The

196. M.A.H. Ispahani, op. cit., p. 114. The honourable part, which this "unknown schoolmaster of Zakariya Street" successfully played to protect the Muslims of Calcutta, when more prominent and prosperous League leaders had left them on the eve of the Partition, has been described elsewhere. Incidentally, Mohammad Osman was not such a complete obscurity as would appear from Ispahani's account. In the Calcutta Corporation he was Secretary of the Muslim League party. He also told the present writer that the Muslim League party had never nominated Ispahani, though its Chairman—A.R. Siddiqi—favoured him.

197. Abdur Rab, op. cit., p. 163.

mystery is not far to seek. If Calcutta would have been divided and a part assigned to Pakistan, the demand to set up the capital of Pakistan there would probably have been raised. The Muslims of Bengal would have had the upper hand in the affairs of Pakistan."[198]

Abdur Rab's insinuations have no basis in fact. All the details of the relevant negotiations are not available but there are ample indications to show that the case for Calcutta was pressed as strongly as possible. This was done from the very beginning. Hugh Tinker, who has had access to some unpublished material, says that while giving his exposition of Pakistan demand to the Cabinet Mission, Jinnah pointed out that there could be "some territorial adjustments" in case of Muslim provinces, but "not over Calcutta, *as necessary to Pakistan as the heart is to a man*."[199] Abdur Rab thinks that the future of Calcutta depended upon the arguments before the Boundary Commission. There is no reason to believe that the case for the city which the Quaid considered "as necessary to Pakistan as the heart is to a man" was not fully pressed before the Commission, but the position was that Mountbatten had already entered into "a secret agreement" with the Congress regarding the assignment of Calcutta to India. This was revealed by Patel in a speech made by him in Calcutta on 15 January 1950, when he said: "We made a condition that we could only agree to partition if we did not lose Calcutta."[200] This finds support in the statement of Lord Ismay who specifies in his *Memoirs* that under the original proposals, which he took to London on 2 May,[201] India was to get "Western Bengal (which was to include Calcutta)."[202]

Abdur Rab refers to the possibility of Calcutta being divided and shared by India and Pakistan. When it appeared "virtually certain" that Calcutta would go to India, an attempt to secure some sort of joint control was made. "It was suggested that if Pakistan had access to Calcutta's facilities, concessions might be

198. Ibid., pp. 163–64.
199. Hugh Tinker, op. cit., p. 40. Italics ours.
200. Quoted in Chaudhri Muhammad Ali, op. cit., p. 208.
201. In ibid., 2 July 1947 is the date given. This is a slip.
202. Lord Ismay, *Memoirs*, p. 420.

extracted in exchange, which would lessen the barriers of partition." An emissary was sent to Patel to propose the arrangements for six months. His reply was, "Not even for six hours."[203] Considering that he already had a commitment in his favour, this answer was not surprising!

From the information revealed by Patel and Ismay, it is clear that the future of Calcutta had been decided—unfairly and behind the back of the League leaders—even before the appointment of the Boundary Commission and the insinuations made by Abdur Rab are completely baseless. With regard to replacement of Suhrawardy by Nazim-ud-Din also, his remarks are unwarranted. The latter's candidature was not "actively backed by the League High Command". The Quaid-i Azam let the League members of East Bengal "exercise their democratic right to electing their leader". In fact, he issued a public statement on 28 July 1947 disowning anybody who may be using his name in support of an individual for election as leader of Assembly Party in Bengal or the Punjab[204] (a similar statement was issued regarding Sind[205] three days later). In Bengal Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din was elected as he had distinct advantages in the new situation. "Calcutta, which had been Suhrawardy's stronghold, had gone to India. Khwajah Nazimuddin came from Dacca and had a greater following among the members of the provincial assembly in East Bengal." There were some other factors also. For one thing the support of Maulana Akram Khan (and other religious-minded members) greatly contributed to Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din's success. Another important factor was the fact that the efficient and all-powerful Ispahani family made all its resources available for defeating Suhrawardy. The accession of seventeen votes from Sylhet also helped Nazim-ud-Din.To these factors may be added Suhrawardy's own handicaps. He was a singularly brilliant individual able and courageous, and had rendered signal services to the cause of

203. Hugh Tinker, op. cit., p. 128.

204. Rafique Afzal, Ed., *Selected Speeches and Statements of the Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah*, p. 426.

205. Ibid., pp. 427–28.

Pakistan, but he had some damaging "blind spots". Amongst other things, he could be exceedingly tactless and treated even the members of his cabinet with scant courtesy. We have already quoted Choudhry Khaliquzzaman to show how, during March 1947, Suhrawardy's colleagues like Fazlur Rahman and Hamid-ul-Haq Chaudhry, wanted to break away from Suhrawardy. The Quaid-i Azam averted this crisis by sending Khaliquzzaman to effect a patch-up at Calcutta, but even then the dissenters claimed the "support of over 70 Muslim members". When the East Bengal Assembly Party came into existence, the position of this group became decisive and they carried out their plans without any difficulty.

There is no evidence at all to show that the Quaid-i Azam encouraged the change-over of leadership in Bengal. In fact, no such encouragement was needed. The factors outlined above adequately explain the replacement of Suhrawardy. Tables were turned against him, not on account of any encouragement of "the League High Command," but on account of forces operating within Bengal.

The Muslim League Government headed by Suhrawardy had to face many problems, but its position was strong and there is no doubt that the solid support given to the demand for Pakistan by the government of a major province was an important factor in the achievement of that demand. When in April 1946 newly elected Muslim legislators held an All-India Convention, which finalised the Muslim demand, the main resolution was moved by Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy. He also had to bear the brunt of "Direct Action Day," which was organised at Calcutta on 16 August 1946 in accordance with a resolution passed by the Council of the All-India Muslim League.

In August 1947, members of the Muslim League Party in the new province of East Bengal elected Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din as their leader. Some weeks after the Partition, Suhrawardy was offered a seat in the Pakistan Cabinet, but he stayed on at Calcutta to deal with communal bitterness. He joined hands with Mahatma Gandhi, and there is no doubt that it was this "Two-Man Boundary Force" which saved Muslims in Calcutta and else-

where in West Bengal from the fate which Muslims suffered at Delhi, and other places in Northern India. Shaheed Suhrawardy's motives in staying on in Calcutta may have been mixed—chagrin at being ousted by Nazim-ud-Din, attachment to Calcutta, father's illness, loyalty to Calcutta Muslims—but many consider this to have been his "Finest Hour".

Suhrawardy's continuance in Calcutta after the Partition was not viewed favourably by some people in Pakistan, but no evidence that he betrayed Muslim interests has ever been produced. The situation which he confronted in Calcutta has been, on the other hand, vividly described by a promiment outsider. Lt.-General Francis Tuker says about the situation in Calcutta in the middle of August 1947:

"For some days Muslims of Calcutta had been demonstrating in front of the houses of their leaders insisting that they should not flee from Calcutta. They raided the Muslim League office in Calcutta, broke up furniture, destroyed files and molested the staff. There was panic among Calcutta Muslims. Large numbers of them moved elsewhere, evacuating their old haunts such as Balliaghata and Maniktola and crowding together for sanctuary in certain predominantly Muslim areas of the city. The feelings of Muslims in Calcutta may be taken as the feelings of Muslims in all the provinces of the Command: they were deserted, leaderless, depressed and on the defensive with almost a Hindu fatalism."[206]

It was this situation with which Suhrawardy had to deal, and his efforts to provide comfort to Bengal Muslims did not endear him to the communalist Hindus. Even when he had joined Mahatma Gandhi, he was profoundly distrusted. On 31 August, there were rowdy demonstrations at Gandhi's residence at Calcutta. "Where is the rascal Suhrawardy?" shouted someone from among the crowd. "It seems that they intended to lynch Suhrawardy. Luckily he was not in the house. . . ."[207] Due to Gandhi's supreme efforts this storm blew over, but the Hindu distrust of Suhrawardy persisted. "People warned Gandhi that by allowing him to be near all the time he was allowing Shaheed [Suhrawardy]

206. Lt.-General Sir Francis Tuker, op. cit., pp. 408–09.
207. Pyarelal, op. cit., II, 404.

to spy upon him and the Union Government."[208] Even Gandhi said to his Secretary about Suhrawardy: "He has not changed his spots." Of course, Suhrawardy was too high-minded to do any spying, but the account which Pyarelal gives of his courageous pro-Pakistani replies to Gandhi (e.g. at p. 480) shows that even while in Gandhi's entourage he was as much a spokesman of the Quaid and Pakistan as Gandhi's helper in curbing communal passions and promoting Indo-Pakistan amity.

The three stalwarts, whose activities form the theme of this section—Fazl-ul-Haq, Nazim-ud-Din and Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy—lived on to play significant parts in Pakistan. Those activities belong to the history of the new state. They were political rivals and occasionally worked in opposition to one another. They had their weaknesses, to which brief references have been made, but all of them had their own individual contribution to make and are entitled to a high place in the national history. Fazl-ul-Haq was the first to enter the political field and his record of service to Muslim Bengal was the longest. His special fields were education and uplift of the rural masses, but he also moved the Lahore Resolution in 1940 and lived on to work with Chaudhri Muhammad Ali to give the country its first agreed constitution which, despite its weaknesses, demonstrated the political viability of Pakistan. Suhrawardy appeared on the scene many years later but, with his ability, courage and capacity for hard work, outshone them all at one time. He built up the Muslim League in Bengal and was the principal organiser of the election campaign which won for the League 113 out of 119 Muslim seats. This spectacular success, by leading to the establishment of a Muslim League government in a major province—while Punjab was still controlled by the Unionist-Congress coalition!—made Pakistan a practical proposition. Suhrawardy also moved, at the Muslim Legislators' Convention of April 1946, the main resolution about the future constitutional set-up which, more than the Lahore Resolution, determined the final shape of Pakistan. Of the three Prime Ministers which Bengal gave to Pakistan, he was easily the

208. Ibid., II, 485.

ablest and most effective. Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din lacked Suhrawardy's brilliance, but his contribution at the crucial moment was also of decisive value. He had sound common sense, was widely respected for his probity,[209] old-world courtesy—or what Pyarelal calls "all the gentlemanliness of a thoroughbred"—and helpfulness and was, above all, unwavering in his loyalty to the Quaid-i Azam and devotion to the cause of Pakistan. When Fazl-ul-Haq was in the political wilderness and Shaheed was prepared to toy with the idea of a United Bengal, "Khwaja Nazimuddin was," according to Mountbatten, "just as adamant as Jinnah about Pakistan!"

All the three made their contribution and East Pakistan has shown the same regard for all of them. They lie buried in the grounds of Dacca High Court, side by side, in a small piece of land which has already become the scene of political pilgrimage.

SIND

Sind was conquered by the British in 1843. For four years it was administered as a separate province, but in 1847 it was joined to Bombay, the nearest British territory at that time. Even under the Mirs of Sind the day-to-day administration was in the hands of the Hindu *Amils*, whose position greatly improved under the British. Trade and industry was, of course, the Hindu monopoly everywhere. An effort to stem the tide was made by Khan Bahadur Hasan Ali Effendi, who was a successful

209. It may not be out of place to reproduce what Pyarelal learnt about Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din's integrity from Police Superintendent Abdullah (himself an officer with an enviable reputation for honesty and integrity): "I asked for extra powers to deal with corruption," Abdullah told us. "He [Nazim-ud-Din] said I had full power to search even his residence and put him under arrest if I found him guilty of any corrupt practice. Just then the telephone on his table buzzed. It was his wife calling. 'Can't you send for some extra sugar and flour—it is Id festival today?' 'Here is Abdullah sitting before me,' went back the reply. 'I have just been telling him he has full power to search my premises and put me under arrest if he finds me indulging in any irregularity. He will be down upon us if there is the slightest infraction of the rationing rules.' That was the end of the Begum Sahiba's Id request" (Pyarelal, op. cit., II, 427).

solicitor of Karachi and was called Effendi, as he exercised consular authority on behalf of the Turkish Government in respect of the large number of pilgrims visiting Mecca and Medina, which were then in the Ottoman Empire.

Hasan Ali was born in 1830 at Hyderabad (Pakistan). His ancestors were attached to the court of the Mirs of Sind, but in 1843 the British conquered the area and displaced the Mirs. Hasan Ali was educated according to the old curriculum and had to accept a very low post in the beginning, but he studied English on his own and in course of time became Head Clerk in the District Sessions Court. Later, he got himself enrolled as a Vakil and after some years of practice at Hyderabad moved to Karachi. He distinguished himself here and in course of time became a Public Prosecutor which post was held by him for fifteen years. During this time he used to contribute articles to the English newspapers published from Karachi. In some of these articles, Hasan Ali replied to criticism against the Sultan of Turkey, usual at that time in the European press. These articles came into the notice of authorities at Istanbul and, with the consent of the Government of India, Hasan Ali was appointed as Turkish Consul at Karachi.

For raising funds for the Sindh Madrasah, Hasan Ali toured extensively, but the main assistance came from the Mir of Khairpur who promised that if the Madrasah had an English principal, his salary would be paid by the Khairpur State and the grant for the institution would also be increased. An English Principal (Percy Hyde) was recruited from England through M.A.O. College, Aligarh, and when he left the institution, Professor Wance was appointed to the post. He spent some twenty years to build up the institution. The acquisition of a suitable plot for the Madrasah in Karachi city was not easy. Hasan Ali solved the problem by obtaining at a nominal rent the old Serai where caravans to Kalat and Baluchistan used to halt and which had fallen into disuse after the introduction of the railways. Suitable additions to the building were made, including an impressive mosque, a boarding-house and a new school building. Hasan Ali died in 1896, but by then the institu-

tion was on a firm footing and his son who was working in the Education Department joined the Madrasah on deputation.[210]

Hasan Ali was a great friend of Syed Ameer Ali, the celebrated author and founder of the Central[211] National Mohammedan Association of Calcutta. Under Ameer Ali's influence, Hasan Ali organised one of the earliest and most active branches of the Association at Karachi. In 1884, Syed Ameer Ali visited Karachi to help in a case which involved a large number of respectable Muslims and had "created a great stir among the Muslims of the Punjab and Sind". The case arose out of the conversion of a Hindu woman to Islam and nearly a "hundred and fifty of the most respectable [Muslim] citizens of Sind were involved". Ameer Ali received a most enthusiastic reception at all the important railway stations during his journey to Karachi. The fact that a Muslim barrister had to be brought all the way from Calcutta to Karachi to plead the case of the Muslim accused brought out the handicaps of the Muslims of Sind and the need for taking effective measures to deal with them. Presumably, it was during Ameer Ali's visit to Karachi that a branch of the National Mohammedan Association was formed.

When Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy of India, visited Karachi in 1886, "Mr. Hasan Ali, on behalf of his Association, read an address in which it was openly asserted that the European officials of Sind were under the influence of the Hindus and that the Mohammedans were kept out everywhere."[212] After this, the Sind administration took some remedial measures.

Even more beneficial was the establishment, by Hasan Ali and his colleagues, of the Madrasa-tul-Islam of Karachi which had on its rolls the future Quaid-i Azam for some years. This—

210. These details are based on an article in *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq*, Lahore, of August 1968.

211. This organisation was started as National Mohammedan Association on 12 May 1878, but was later re-named the Central National Mohammedan Association after it had its branches in various parts of the subcontinent.

212. Nagendranath Gupta, op. cit., p. 90.

like the opening of the branch of Central National Mohammedan Association—was a byproduct of Syed Ameer Ali's visit to Karachi in 1884. He gave some interesting information about the Madrasah in his presidential address at the Mohammedan Educational Conference of 1899. He said:

"When I visited Karachi in 1884, I delivered a lecture on the educational backwardness of the Indian Muslims. A Committee was immediately set up and substantial funds were collected to establish a school on the lines of the Aligarh College. The Amir of Khairpur made a handsome donation. The members of the Committee toured India to obtain moral and financial support and within a year to eighteen months Hasan Ali and his co-workers were able to set up an educational institution which provided for a department of Handicrafts and Industry in addition to the normal educational curriculum" [retranslated from Urdu].

The Madrasah started in a small building, but next year the foundation-stone of its present magnificent building was laid by Lord Dufferin. The demand for a proper grant for the Madrasah by the Karachi Municipality was resisted by Hindu members, but their "contention was defeated by combined votes of the Mohammedan and European Municipal Commissioners". Gupta, who relates this, adds: "Since then, Hindus and Muslims in Sind have been drifting apart."[213]

Hasan Ali passed away in 1896, but his son Wali Muhammad, who became the Principal of the Madrasah, continued to look after the institution. On 21 June 1943, the Madrasah Board established the Sind Muslim College, of which the foundation-stone was appropriately laid by the most distinguished "old boy" of the Sind Madrasah—Quaid-i Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

In 1907, the All-India Mohammedan Educational Conference held its sessions at Karachi, when the position of the Muslims of Sind was reviewed. Nothing substantial could, however, be done as Sind was tagged on to Bombay and was being administered on peculiar administrative lines from that far-off place.

The administrative arrangements were so unsatisfactory and the Commissioner of Sind had such dictatorial powers that when

213. Ibid.

in 1913 the All-India National Congress held its annual session at Karachi, the Chairman of the Reception Committee urged the separation of Sind from Bombay. The Hindus of Sind originally favoured the separation of Sind from Bombay and its being joined to the Punjab, with which it had become closely connected after opening of North Western Railway, and for which Karachi was the natural sea-port. The Muslims, largely under the influence of *Pirs* and big Zamindars, were traditionally conservative, but during the visit of Edwin Montagu to Karachi in 1917 the Sind branch of the Central National Mohammedan Association raised the question of separation of Sind. In 1925, the All-India Muslim League adopted a resolution moved by Shaikh Abdul Majid Sindhi, urging separation of Sind from Bombay. The Delhi Proposals of 1927 included the separation of Sind as one of the Muslim demands. Thereafter, separation of Sind became an all-India question and the proposal was vehemently opposed by the Hindu leaders. Even the Bombay Provincial Committee, which was appointed to work with the Simon Commission and was presided over by Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto, did not recommend separation, though Syed Miran Muhammad Shah dissented from the majority view. The Simon Commission, only, recommended the examination of the financial and administrative details of the proposal. By now Sind Muslims were getting organised and a new leadership was rising. The case for the separation of Sind had been argued before the Bombay Committee by a deputation on behalf of Sind Mohammedan Association. The leading lights of this deputation were Khan Bahadur Muhammad Ayub Khuro and Khan Bahadur Wali Muhammad Hasan Ali, son of the founder of Sind Madrasah. Thereafter, Khan Bahadur Khuro was particularly active. He issued a booklet *Sufferings of Sind* in reply to Hindu criticism and visited England to appear before the Joint Parliamentary Select Committee. The Muslim opinion was, now, unanimously in favour of separation and in the Government of India Act of 1935 the demand for separation of Sind was accepted.

Sind became a separate autonomous province on 1 April 1936 and, contrary to expectations, its financial position was also satis-

factory, but politically the picture for the first few years was very confused. Coupland, who reviewed the working of provincial self-governments till the end of 1942 was very critical:

"The separation of Sind from Bombay had been a concession to communalism. Its Moslems had been lifted from a minority status to that of a majority. It was clearly up to them to make a success of the new 'Moslem Province,' but they betrayed from the outset an even more desperate incapacity to unite for the purpose of forming a strong and stable administration than the Moslems of Bengal or of Assam. . . . Elsewhere, as has been seen, governments were deprived of security and self-confidence by this lack of a steady and coherent party system, but nowhere was their hold on office more hazardous than in Sind."[214]

An account of what happened in Sind politics from 1937 to 1946 makes dismal reading. Nobody seemed to have any loyalty except to himself. Even the veteran leader of a party would unceremoniously cross the floor of the House, if that seemed the only means of securing a ministership. For quite a time Khan Bahadur Allah Baksh maintained a pro-Congress government mainly with the help of Hindu votes which were considerably in excess of the Hindu share on the basis of population. He was dismissed by the Governor when he renounced his title and expressed pro-Congress views, after it started Direct Action against the government in 1942. On 22 October 1942, Sir Ghulam Husain Hidayatullah formed a Coalition Government consisting of two members of the Muslim League, one independent Muslim, and two Hindus. This ministry started well and for the first time it appeared that the Muslim League had, after all, obtained control of the province. All the Muslim ministers joined the League, and on 3 March 1943 the Sind Assembly passed a resolution on the lines of the Lahore Resolution of 1940. On 14 May the ex-Premier, Allah Bakhsh, was set upon by four men near Shikarpur and shot dead. "The murder was said to have nothing to do with politics."[215] Khan Bahadur M.A. Khuro was implicated but was discharged for want of proof.

The differences amongst the Muslim members, however,

214. R. Coupland, *Indian Politics, 1936–1942*, p. 65.
215. *Idem*, *The Future of India*, p. 3.

undermined the position of the ministry. Acute differences arose between G.M. Syed, the President of the Sind Muslim League, and Premier Ghulam Husain Hidayatullah, which gradually crystallised on the basis of principles and policies. On 7 July 1944, the Working Committee of the Sind Provincial Muslim League passed a resolution criticising the Muslim League Ministry for failure to give relief to the Haris and formation of syndicates for handling food purchases, and called upon the ministers to resign. In December 1944, the Quaid-i Azam tried to settle the differences between the provincial Premier and the head of the provincial League, but without real success, and the position of the ministry remained unsteady. On 2 January 1946, G.M. Syed was expelled from the All-India Muslim League by the Action Committee of the League. Next month, a coalition was formed between the Congress representatives and the Muslim dissident groups including supporters of G.M. Syed and late Khan Bahadur Allah Bakhsh, and Sir Ghulam Husain Hidayatullah tendered his resignation. The position was so unsettled that the Governor of Sind prorogued the Sind Legislative Assembly and ordered re-elections which were held in December 1946. These elections which were fought on party tickets resulted in the election of twenty Congressmen, thirty-five Muslim Leaguers, and three Europeans and two members of the Jamiat. The Muslim League Ministry was re-formed on 3 January 1947 with Ghulam Husain Hidayatullah as Premier and with Messrs M.A. Khuro, Pir Ilahi Bakhsh, Pirzada Abdus Sattar, Mir Ghulam Ali Khan Talpur, and Mir Bunde Ali Khan Talpur, as Ministers. On 26 June 1947, Sind Legislative Assembly decided at a special sitting that Sind should join the new Pakistan Constituent Assembly and thus Sind became the first province to opt for Pakistan under the scheme of 3 June 1947.

NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE

In N.-W.F.P., Muslims were in an overwhelming majority, but this area had been kept completely outside the orbit of constitutional reforms. Neither the Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909 nor

Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme applied to the province. Even its separate entity was under attack. When in 1901 Lord Curzon created a new province by separating some districts from the Punjab, the Hindus, not only of the affected areas, but also of other parts of India, were opposed to the step. They continued to agitate for its re-amalgamation with the Punjab and ironically it was one of these attempts which went amiss and paved the way for the extension of reforms to the N.-W.F.P. In September 1921, Sir Sivaswami Aiyer moved a resolution in the Central Legislative Assembly urging that judiciary in N.-W.F.P. should be placed under the Punjab High Court (of which Sir Shadi Lal was the all-powerful Chief Justice) and an Inquiry Committee be appointed to examine and report whether the purpose underlying the creation of the separate province of N.-W.F.P. had been fulfilled, and if not why the area should not be re-amalgamated with the Punjab. The resolution was passed and a Committee headed by (Sir) Denys Bray, Foreign Secretary of the Government of India, was appointed to undertake this survey. The Committee which had three British, three Muslim and two Hindu members, submitted its report in March 1924. The British and the Muslim members recommended that as far as possible the province should be placed on a par with other provinces of the subcontinent, while the Hindu members opposed this in a Joint Note of Dissent. The manner in which communal considerations proved more powerful than even those of regional self-interest was seen when the future of N.-W.F.P. came to be discussed in the Punjab Legislative Council. Rai Bahadur Obhrai says:

"In the debates of the Punjab Legislative Council, it was curious to observe that while the Sikh votes were divided, the Hindus of the Punjab voted as a body, against their own class-interests, for re-amalgamation of North-West Frontier Province with the Punjab, to avoid the situation of a perpetual hopeless minority that confronted their brethren in a Frontier Province. The Muslim members of the Punjab Legislative Council, who would have gained immensely in strength by the inclusion of Pathan population of North-West Frontier, cast a solid vote against re-amalgamation to enable their co-religionists in North-

West Frontier Province to have a dominating position for ever in a Pathan Province."[216]

In fact, the question of the future of N.-W.F.P. assumed importance as a part of bigger Hindu-Muslim struggle. As Simon Commission pointed out:

"the demand for the introduction of reforms in the N.W.F. Province is largely due to a desire by the Mohammedans of India to add to their strength by advancing the constitutional status of a province which contains a majority of their co-religionists."[217]

The task of the Muslim leaders was greatly helped by the recommendations of the Bray Committee, whose favourable recommendations owed not a little to the influence, diplomatic skill and public-spiritednees of Sir Abdul Qayum and (Khan Bahadur) Sa'd Ullah Khan.

The next milestone after the Bray Committee's report was reached when Maulvi Syed Murtaza Bahadur, a member from Madras, moved a resolution before the Central Legislative Assembly on 16 February 1926 recommending to the Governor-General-in-Council that the provisions of the Government of India Act relating to the Legislative Councils should be applied to N.-W.F.P. Syed Murtaza Bahadur, who was a member of the Swarajist Party headed by Pandit Moti Lal Nehru, was asked by the leader of the party not to move this resolution, but Syed Murtaza Bahadur successfully resisted all pressure brought on him. Ultimately, he resigned from the Swarajist Party and took part in the discussions as an independent member. The resolution was supported by M.A. Jinnah, Sahibzadah Sir Abdul Qayum, Khan Bahadur Maulvi Ghulam Bari, Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan and was opposed by Pandit Malaviya, Sir Hari Singh Gaur and other Hindu members. The official *bloc* remained neutral, but after a lucid speech by Syed Murtaza Bahadur the resolution was passed. (In the meanwhile, the Swarajist Party had staged a walk-out on another issue.)

No action was taken to implement Syed Murtaza's resolution,

216. Rai Bahadur Diwan Chand Obhrai, *The Evolution of the North-West Frontier Province*, p. 111.
217. Ibid., pp. 137–38.

but now the extension of reforms to N.-W.F. Province became a major demand of the Muslim League and other Muslim organisations. The recommendations of the Simon Commission, however, involved considerable curtailment of the recommendations made by the Bray Committee and the Central Legislative Assembly. The Commission recognised the need for "setting up suitable representative institutions" in N.-W.F.P. but its operative recommendations were governed by an approach forcefully expressed in a sentence of its report: "The inherent right of a man to smoke the cigarette must necessarily be curtailed if he lives in a powder magazine." The Commission recommended the creation of a Council, of which the composition was to be completely different from other Legislative Assemblies and which could be easily "managed" by the Chief Commissioner. The Muslim League and the Muslim Conference, however, continued the struggle for placing N.-W.F.P. on a par with other provinces, and the next stage was reached at the Round Table Conference which set up a sub-committee to deal with the question. The sub-committee recommended on 1 January 1931 that the five administered districts should be given the status of a Governor's province, subject to such adjustments of detail as local circumstances required. This meant that the basic principle for which the Muslims had been fighting was conceded. Details relating to the implementation of the decision of the Round Table Conference were worked out by a committee set up by the Government of India. On 28 November 1932, Lord Willingdon inaugurated the Frontier Legislative Council and Sahibzadah Sir Abdul Qayum Khan, who had worked hard and skilfully to obtain proper status for the province, was appointed as the sole minister in charge of the Transferred Departments.

Sir Abdul Qayum had worked hard to get the reforms extended to N.-W.F.P., but the position in the Legislature underwent a drastic change with the introduction of Provincial Autonomy in 1937. The province was now on a par with other areas. Under the Communal Award the non-Muslims had been given very heavy weightage and occupied fourteen out of fifty seats, although on the population basis they could hardly claim more than three

or four. The position was that if the Muslim votes were split, the Hindus could dominate the situation. In 1937 elections, the Congress Party, headed by Dr Khan Sahib, had won nineteen seats while the United Muslims Nationalist Party led by Sir Abdul Qayum secured sixteen. The Hindu-Sikh Nationalist Party won eight seats, while the remaining seven Muslim members were divided in three groups. In the beginning, Sir Abdul Qayum formed the ministry, as the Congress Party refused to accept office—in N.-W.F.P. as elsewhere—until certain assurances were given by the Governors regarding the use of their special powers. This matter was ultimately settled between the Congress leaders and the Viceroy and in September 1937 Dr Khan Sahib, after securing the support of some members from other groups, formed the government. Sir Abdul Qayum retired from public life and passed away three months later.

For understanding these cataclysmic changes in the political life of the N.-W.F.P., one has to go back to the early history of the area and take note of the fact that, owing to the preponderating majority of Muslims, the communal problem here was quite different from the provinces like the Punjab, where Muslims and Hindus (-cum-Sikhs) were equally balanced. Besides, the Pathans have a long tradition of hostility to the British. The traditional hostility of the Pathans to the British, which was fed by the colony of the *Mujahidin*, originally established by the successors of Syed Ahmad Brelvi, found expression in raids on British territory and cantonments. These led to some regular campaigns by the British and were later sought to be controlled by the rigidity of the Frontier Crimes Regulations. The man who steered Pathan energies into constructive channels in a big way and whom Dr Waheed-uz-Zaman rightly calls "the grand old man of the North-West Frontier Province" was Sahibzadah (Sir) Abdul Qayum. He came from an old Pathan family, which claimed descent from Sultan Ibrahim Lodi, the last Afghan ruler of Delhi, but had latterly become prominent in religious and educational sphere. His father Sahibzadah Abdul Rauf wrote a number of books in Persian and Arabic, some of which have been published, but met a violent end in 1873. Sahibzadah Abdul

Qayum was born on 12 December 1863, and after traditional education in Persian and Arabic studied English up to Matriculation. He joined government service in 1887 and by dint of ability rose to occupy some positions of responsibility, which were then reserved for senior and picked British officers—e.g. Political Agency of Khyber. His principal title to lasting fame, however, rests on the foundation of Islamia College, Peshawar, which, after the establishment of Pakistan, flowered into the Peshawar University. Originally, the Sahibzadah set up a committee for running an Islamia High School, and in 1912 with the active co-operation of Sir George Roose-Keppel, Chief Commissioner, N.-W.F.P., laid the foundation of a proper residential college. A fund of Rs 15 lakhs was collected, 200 acres of land purchased and in 1913 construction of well-planned buildings began on lines which made Islamia College, Peshawar, "a garden-town of learning". Sahibzadah Abdul Qayum was the Honorary Life Secretary of the College and built it up with resourcefulness, vision and wisdom. For these services he was selected to preside over the All-India Mohammedan Educational Conference, when that body was celebrating its Golden Jubilee in 1925.

Sir Abdul Qayum had worked hard to get the Reforms extended to the N.-W.F.P., but he was ousted from authority, when Provincial Autonomy was introduced in 1937. There were many reasons for this. Ever since the separation of the area from the Punjab, the people of N.-W.F.P. had some special grievances against the British administration. Civil liberties were severely curtailed and the government officers had complete autocratic powers. The unhealthy situation in the province came more prominently to the notice of people in other areas during the Khilafat movement. Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, an important Khilafat leader and editor of *Zamindar*, who had a number of co-workers in the area, wrote a series of articles entitled *Sarzamin-i be-A'in*—"The Land Without Law"—dealing with the hardships of the people of N.-W.F.P. His colleague Maulana Ishaq of Mansehra (Hazara District) was another prominent Khilafat leader who acquainted the people outside N.-W.F.P. with what was happening there. Within the area also tension

had increased considerably and a network of Khilafat Committees had sprung up all over the province. After the Khilafat movement withered away an Afghan Jirga was set up "for religious, social and economic uplift of the Pathans". In January 1930, a volunteer corps was formed in association with this organisation and given the name of the *Khudai Khidmatgars*. They started picketting of liquor shops, as was being done by the Congress workers in other parts of the subcontinent. Picketting started in Peshawar on 23 April 1930 and a large crowd assembled to see off their leaders who were ordered to be arrested. The Deputy Commissioner rushed armoured cars to the spot and ordered firing which resulted in heavy casualties. This created an unpleasant situation. The news of what was happening in the province was sought to be suppressed, but the efforts of the Khilafat Committee, Peshawar, and the local leaders to lift the curtain received powerful support from an unexpected quarter. In the summer of 1930, Dr Mirza Yaqub Beg, a dedicated social worker and Vice-President of the Punjab Medical Council, was convalescing at Abbottabad and had special opportunities for getting acquainted with the situation. Beginning in the second week[218] of June 1930, he wrote a series of temperately-worded, but well-documented and convincing, articles for the newspapers in Lahore and elsewhere. These articles which were reproduced by the Congress newspapers in many places were later collected and published in a booklet entitled *My Impressions of the Frontier Situation*. They were of great value in building up public opinion outside the province. Mirza Yaqub Beg who was in touch with Sir Abdul Qayum and Khan Bahadur Sa'd-ud-Din Khan, the Judicial Commissioner, corresponded with Mian Sir Fazl-i Husain who himself visited Peshawar and placed the true picture before the Viceroy. As a

218. His first article appeared in *The Tribune*, Lahore, on 11 June 1930. It was considered so important that Isemonger, I.G. Police, N.-W.F.P., replied through a Note which was published in *The Tribune* on 18 June 1930. Dr Mirza Yaqub Beg issued a counter-reply to Isemonger's but in the meanwhile his other articles were appearing in *The Muslim Outlook*, Lahore.

result of these and other efforts, a more liberal attitude was adopted by the Government of India towards N.-W.F.P. than was advocated by the local officials.

The happenings of 23 April 1930 had other important consequences also. The sufferings of the Red Shirts for picketting of liquor shops, which was an important activity taken up by the Congress elsewhere, led to the Red Shirts making a common cause with the Indian National Congress. Their leader Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan adopted Gandhian tactics to an extent that he came to be known as the Frontier Gandhi. He became a prominent member of the Working Committee of the All-India National Congress and in 1935 the venue of the annual sessions of the Congress was named Ghaffar Nagar after him. Within the province he received unanimous support from the Hindus who, though numerically small, had been given such heavy weightage under the Communal Award that the votes of their representatives in the provincial legislature were decisive in case of division amongst the Muslim members.

The Frontier Province had no communal problem like the Punjab or Bengal, where the even distribution of the population led to constant rivalry and conflict. The Muslim League was also very weak, and political life, apart from anti-British activity, was confined "to the traditional rivalry and quarrels of Khans or quasi-feudal land-owners whose influence was now being challenged by the growth of an educated middle class".

In the absence of opposition from a well-organised political party, the Red Shirt leadership succeeded in defeating the representatives of the old aristocracy and when the new Act came into force in 1937, government was formed by Dr Khan Sahib, elder brother of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. By now, cohesion between Red Shirt leaders and the Congress was practically complete. Gandhi paid repeated visits to the province to bring it fully in line with the Congress-dominated areas. In 1939, Dr Khan Sahib's ministry resigned along with other Congress governments. For some time, the province was without a popular Government, but, on 25 May 1943, Sardar Aurangzeb Khan, the Provincial Muslim League leader, was able to form a ministry, with Sardar

Abdur Rab Khan Nishtar as his Finance Minister. The by-elections fought thereafter resulted in decisive victories for the Muslim League, but when after the war the Congress Ministry resumed office, Dr Khan Sahib again became the Premier, with Mehr Chand Khanna in charge of "Finance, National Saving Scheme, Elections, Industries and Companies, Co-operative Societies, Agriculture, Veterinary and Marketing, Stationery and Printing Departments". The conflict between the Muslim League, which was gradually gaining strength, and the Congress Party continued to increase. When the Congress entered the Interim Government at Delhi in October 1946, Nehru visited the tribal areas, but his tour was far from successful. As a matter of fact, there were persistent hostile demonstrations and at times his life was in danger.

In the same year Khan Abdul Qayum Khan, who was a prominent Congress leader of the Frontier and was at one time the deputy leader of the Congress Party in the Central Legislative Assembly, resigned from the Congress and joined the Muslim League. He now became the leader of the Opposition in the Frontier Assembly. On 20 February 1947, he was arrested at Mardan, where the Muslim League had just won a by-election. In retaliation the League started a civil disobedience movement against the Frontier Government, which took drastic measures to deal with the challenge. This led to worsening of the situation, and on 10 March serious communal rioting broke out in Peshawar. The Quaid-i Azam, "always quick to oppose communal violence, sent an urgent request to the Frontier League to refrain from provocative action,"[219] and Pir Sahib of Manki Sharif, who had organised the demonstrations, "ordered his followers to limit themselves to peaceful resistance."[220] The struggle between the League and the Congress was going on when Mountbatten Plan for the future of India was announced, according to which two separate Constituent Assemblies were to be set up and different areas were to choose which Assembly

219. James W. Spain, *The Pathan Borderland*, p. 195.
220. Ibid.

to join. On 6 May 1947, an emergency meeting of the Congress Working Committee was held at Delhi, at which the Frontier situation was discussed. After this, for the first time, a proposal for Pakhtunistan, described[221] by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan as "a free Pathan state within India" (*sic*!) was mooted by certain leaders associated with Dr Khan Sahib's cabinet. On 3 June 1947, the Viceroy had announced his Plan which was accepted by the Congress and the League. This provided, *inter alia*, for "a referendum in the N.W.F.P. without any disturbance in the present Ministry, to decide which of the two constituent assemblies they would join".

On 18 June, talks were held between Mahatma Gandhi, Quaid-i Azam and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. In view of the objection taken by the Congress ministry at Peshawar and the Congress leaders at Delhi, the Governor of the province, Sir Olaf Caroe, to whom the Congress leaders had objected, was granted "leave for a period of two months during which time the referendum was to be held there". General Sir Robert Lockhart was appointed Governor for this period. The referendum which was held from 6 July to 17 July, and of which results were announced on 20 July, decided in favour of Pakistan. Votes cast in favour of Pakistan were 289,244, while those in favour of India numbered only 2874. The Red Shirts had boycotted the referendum, but, as stated by Brecher, the biographer of Nehru, "the consensus of opinion was that a majority would have favoured Pakistan even if Redshirts had contested the issue".[222] Considering that some 51% of the total electorate (572,980) had cast their votes in favour of Pakistan and that this proportion was very much higher in relation to the valid votes cast in the last election (375,989), the accuracy of the information obtained by Brecher from Indian politicians is obvious.

On 29 June 1947, at a special meeting of the Shahi Jirga, Baluchistan also decided to join Pakistan.

221. *Vide* extracts from Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's letter dated 8 June (1947) addressed to Gandhi as reproduced in D.G. Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, p. 433.

222. Brecher, *Nehru : A Political Biography*, p. 351.

Chapter 14

Quaid-i Azam MUHAMMAD ALI JINNAH (1876–1948)

I. The Beginning

MAULANA Muhammad Ali is reported to have said towards the end of his life: "I learnt Islam from Abul Kalam Azad and Iqbal—one pulls me in one direction, and the other points to the opposite way." Ultimately he gravitated towards the viewpoint of the poet, but the man who did most to give a concrete shape to the political vision of Iqbal was another Muhammad Ali, whose transformation, through a painful process, from being an accredited "Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity" to the most thoroughgoing championship of Muslim separatism completely altered the course of Indian history.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who was probably the first member of his family to have a distinctly Muslim name, was born at Karachi in 1876. He came from a family of Ismaili Khojas who had settled at Paneli village in Gondal state of Kathiawar. His father Jinnahbhai Poonja was born around 1850 and was a progressive, forward-looking individual. He considered Paneli to be too small for his talents and moved to Gondal which was the big town of the area. He made good there and was married to Mithi Bai around 1874. Soon he came to consider even Gondal too small to fulfil his dreams and, like many other Kathiawaris, thought of migrating to Bombay, but ultimately chose Karachi. Here, his first child was born on Sunday the 25th of December, 1876.[1] Hitherto, the family had lived in a Hindu state and

1. There is some discrepancy in the early records relating to the Quaid's birth—not unusual in those days of imperfect recordings of births. The generally accepted date is given here.

predominantly Hindu environments and the names of the members of the family were such as to enable them to move about and carry on their business without exciting curiosity or antagonism. Now, however, they were in Sind, a Muslim area, and Jinnahbhai and his wife Mithi Bai felt freer. They chose a distinctly Islamic name for their firstborn and continued this practice with their six other children, who were all given purely Muslim names.

Jinnahbhai and Mithi Bai had several children, but there is no doubt that Muhammad Ali was their favourite. Their love for him is shown by the fact that for his *Aqeeqah* ceremony they travelled back to Kathiawar to have the ceremony performed at the *dargah* of a well-known Ismaili *pir* at a village some ten miles from Paneli. This journey, which had to be performed partly by boat, across the Arabian Sea from Karachi to Verawal, and partly by bullock cart, could not have taken less than a month and is a fair indication of the warm love of the fond parents.

In the new atmosphere of Karachi, Jinnahbhai seems to have strongly felt the Islamic influences. Not only did he give Muslim names to his children, but after he had spent a year or so in a neighbouring primary school Muhammad Ali was transferred to the newly opened Sind Madrasa-tul-Islam, situated about a mile from his residence. Muhammad Ali was the eleventh boy to be admitted in the new and distinctly Muslim institution. It is also significant that when Muhammad Ali left Karachi for Bombay for a few months, he joined the Anjuman-i Islam School there. He, however, returned before very long and again became a student of the Sind Madrasah and continued there till he left for England on 5 January 1891.

G. Allana to whom we are indebted for the above detail says that the Quaid's eldest sister was married to a Sunni Khoja with the permission of His Highness The Aga Khan. He does not give the date of this event. Nor does he indicate when and how Muhammad Ali Jinnah whose father was an Ismaili, at least in the early days, himself became an Isna Ashri Shiah. An

American scholar (Mrs Hanna Papanek) who has been conducting research about the business communities of Pakistan once told the present writer that, according to the information collected by her, the Quaid's father was a Barbhai—i.e. a member of the reformist group[2] who fought a case against the first Aga Khan in 1860 in the Bombay High Court and, after their failure, broke away from the Ismaili leader. This information does not harmonise with Allana's account, but if it is correct, young Muhammad Ali may be said to have inherited not only his dynamic, forward-looking approach, but also his courage and capacity to strike out a new path, from his father. In the new environments of Karachi, Jinnahbhai's affairs continued to flourish for a long time. He handled import-export business and had special contacts with a British concern, Grahams Shipping and Trading Company. Jinnahbhai had not studied English at school, but such was his energy and desire to make good that he learnt to read and write English at a comparatively advanced age and became fairly conversant in this. As very few local merchants were able to converse in English, his proficiency in that language brought him close to Frederick Leigh Croft, the General Manager of the Grahams Shipping and Trading Company, and enabled him to carry on correspondence in English with foreign firms in England, Hong Kong, etc.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah might have followed the profession of his forefathers but he showed such early signs of brilliance that Croft advised Jinnahbhai to send the young Muhammad Ali to qualify for the Bar. He, therefore, left for England at the age of sixteen and, returning to India in 1896, began to practise as a barrister at Bombay.

Jinnah had some very difficult years to pass through at the beginning of his legal career. He, however, was not only able to

2. To support her thesis, she has sent me the following quotation from *Karachi, 1839–1947*, by Behram S. Rustomji, who says: "If the Ismailis, the Aga Khanis, as commonly known, have set up their exclusive Jamatkhanas and primary schools, the Isnaashri Khojas, the reformists of whom the Quaid-i-Azam was one, had done much in the civic life of the city" (p. 109).

win for himself a leading position at the Bar, but soon found wider scope for his talents. He made his debut in Indian politics in 1906, and in quite a characteristic manner. "His own political views had been shaped by association with Gokhale, Dadabhai Naoroji and Surendra Nath Bannerjee" and his ambition, as he himself admitted, was "to become the Muslim Gokhale".[3] Jinnah's earlier training and background determined his political platform, but he was also a Muslim, and not prepared to ignore the Muslim interests. His entry in Indian politics dates from 1906 when he attended the Calcutta sessson of the All-India National Congress, as the Private Secretary of the President—the celebrated Dadabhai Naoroji—but it is worth noting that his very first speech in the Congress arena was about a matter concerning the Muslims—"Waqf al-Aulad".

Later, when he was elected to the Imperial Legislative Council, he sponsored the Waqf Validating Bill, which brought him in closer touch with the Muslim leaders, and his help was now sought by the Muslim community on many occasions. He even attended a session of the All-India Muslim League by invitation, but refused to sign its pledge, as he thought that its political objective was not high enough. He stuck to the All-India National Congress, and, as he said in reply to an article by *The Times*, London, was "proud to belong" to the Congress party. In March 1913, however, the All-India Muslim League amended its constitution so as to provide for the attainment of "a suitable form of self-government" as its goal. Jinnah was at that time in England. When in the latter part of the year, (Sir) Syed Wazir Hasan, the Secretary of All-India Muslim League, and Maulana Muhammad Ali visited England in connection with the Cawnpore mosque, they asked him to join the League under its revised constitution. As the main objection which he had to joining the League had now disappeared, Jinnah consented, and the League got its most forceful personality.

3. See M.H. Saiyid, *Mohammad Ali Jinnah: A Political Study* (1st ed.), p. 39.

II. Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity

A Successful Mission

Once enrolled as a member of [the Muslim League, Jinnah began to play an energetic part in its activities. Gokhale had already hinted that he was suitable for being "the best Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity" and he was not going to waste his opportunities. He began to work for Hindu-Muslim unity from within the League, and to achieve this object he got things so arranged that for the first time the session of the Muslim League was held at the same place as that of the Congress. This session was held in Bombay in 1915, and Mazhar-ul-Haq, who was known for his pro-Congress views, was the President of the Muslim League. At this session, Jinnah moved a resolution for the appointment of a committee which should have powers to confer with other parties. This resolution was supported, amongst others, by Fazl-ul-Haq and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (at that time a member of the Muslim League), and was unanimously adopted.

The next session of the League, which marked the culmination of Jinnah's efforts for Hindu-Muslim unity, was held at Lucknow, and he himself was in the chair. The committee, which was appointed at Bombay, had done useful work in consultation with a similar committee appointed by the All-India National Congress, and after months of difficult negotiations a "Joint Scheme" of reforms was evolved. This scheme, which comprised agreed conclusions about the share of the Muslims under the new reforms, was enthusiastically adopted at the sessions of the League and the Congress. It is known as the "Lucknow Pact" and in India's dismal constitutional history represents the only period when Hindus and Muslims came to agreed conclusions about their future.

Jinnah, in his efforts to bring Hindus and Muslims together, had succeeded beyond his dreams, but unluckily Gokhale did not live to see the success of his young colleague and admirer. He had died in February 1915.

III. Home Rule League

While Jinnah was negotiating and piloting the Hindu-Muslim Pact, he was very much on the League platform, but he had not given up his interest in more general questions affecting India. When he signed the League pledge in 1913 "his two sponsors were required to make a solemn preliminary covenant that loyalty to the Muslim League and the Muslim interest would in no way and at no time imply even the shadow of disloyalty to the larger national cause to which his life was dedicated".[4] Even as the President of the Muslim League, he fully kept up his association with the Indian National Congress and was indeed considered as one of its leading lights. In 1916, he presided over the Bombay Provincial Conference, which had now met for the first time since the Congress split at Surat, and gave a courageous lead not only to the nationalist circles in the presidency but to the whole of the country. He was considered at this time the most important of the political leaders in Bombay, which had all along been the stronghold of Indian nationalism. When Mahatma Gandhi finally returned to India from South Africa, and the Gujerati citizens of Bombay presented him with an address of welcome, Jinnah was chosen to preside at the occasion. He was elected chairman of the Bombay branch of the Home Rule League and was, by all accounts, the coming man in the Congress politics. Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, who saw him in 1917, made the following remarks about him in his *Indian Diary*, published after his death :

"They were followed by Jinnah, young, perfectly mannered, impressive looking, armed to the teeth with dialectics, and insistent upon the whole of his scheme. All its shortcomings, all its drawbacks—the elected members of the Executive Council, the power of the minority to hold up finance—all these were defended as the best makeshifts they could devise short of responsible government. Nothing else would satisfy them. They would rather have nothing if they could not get the whole lot. I was rather tired and I funked him. Chelmsford tried to argue

4. Remarks by Mrs Naidu quoted in ibid., p. 92.

with him and was tied up into knots.

"Jinnah is a very clever man, and it is, of course, an outrage that such a man should have no chance of running the affairs of his own country."[5]

Meanwhile Jinnah was doing everything possible to hasten the advent of the day when his countrymen could get a chance of managing their own affairs. One serious obstacle which had often blocked up constitutional progress in India was the Muslim anxiety about the future, and nobody had done more than Jinnah to remove—at least for the time being—this formidable hurdle. But his political activities were not confined to the removal of a hurdle. He showed great capacity for running political organisations and under his chairmanship the Bombay branch of the Home Rule League became the most powerful limb of the organisation, which at that time dominated the Indian scene. Jinnah dealt boldly and effectively with all reactionaries like Lord Sydenham, who were trying to hold up Indian progress and, in 1918, led a powerful agitation which frustrated the attempts to call a meeting for presenting a farewell address to Lord Willingdon, the retiring Governor of Bombay. About the importance of the latter agitation in India's political history, the Communist newspaper *People's Age* wrote:

"In 1918, in Bombay he [Jinnah] was one of the leading figures in the Anti-Willingdon-Memorial agitation which served to rouse the citizens of Bombay. It was a protest against the autocratic regime of Lord Willingdon, and, perhaps, for the first time the people were asked to intervene against raising a memorial to a retiring Governor. *It constituted the beginning of the post-war agitation.*"[6]

Jinnah's work in this and other movements was appreciated so much by the citizens of Bombay that they raised funds and built the famous "Jinnah People's Memorial Hall," which later housed the offices of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, and was the venue of important nationalist gatherings in the city

5. Edwin S. Montagu, *An Indian Diary*, pp. 57–58. Italics ours.

6. *People's Age*, Bombay, 19 September 1948. Italics ours.

of Bombay.

Jinnah was ably and—as appeared from the grant of Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms—fruitfully carrying on his political activities, when something happened which changed the course of his activities. The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms meant a considerable advance over the existing positions, but any reassuring effect, they might have had on the public, was lost by the Muslim reaction to the treatment meted out to Turkey at the Peace Conference, and the general resentment at the Jallianwala massacre and other performances of the Punjab authorities.

In March 1919, Jinnah resigned from the Imperial Legislative Council as a protest against the passing of what is known as the Rowlatt Act, and in his presidential address at the Calcutta session of the All-India Muslim League, held in September 1920, gave vigorous expression to public resentment. He, however, was not in sympathy with the methods advocated by Mahatma Gandhi to deal with the new situation. He had his first public difference with the Mahatma over the change of the constitution of the Home Rule League. Gandhi had now become the President of the League instead of Mrs Annie Besant, and soon took up the question of changing its creed and renaming it as Swaraj Sabha. Jinnah opposed these moves, pointing out that the constitution of the League could not be changed except when three-fourth of the members voted for the change. The new President, however, gave the ruling that a bare majority could introduce the change, and when Jinnah's amendments were thrown out, he resigned from the League, now renamed Swaraj Sabha. Jinnah's exit from the Home Rule League meant the effective end of that organisation. His break with the Congress came two months later. The annual session of the Indian National Congress was held at Nagpur in December 1920 to consider the Gandhian scheme of non-co-operation. Many prominent leaders, like C.R. Dass and Lala Lajpat Rai, had come to the session, determined to oppose the scheme, but they were won over and in the new atmosphere of enthusiasm and excitement created by their conversion, Jinnah found himself in a hopeless minority. The Congress passed a resolution in favour of non-co-operation, and Jinnah, who had opposed it in a forceful

speech, felt that he and the Congress must part company.

IV. An Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity

The Failure of a Mission

The urbane, constitutional Muhammad Ali Jinnah found, like the uncrowned king of Bengal—Surendranath Banerjea—that he could not follow the Indian National Congress on the unknown and anarchical path of non-co-operation, but, "unlike other liberals and loyalist leaders, Mr. Jinnah did not decry the struggle directly or indirectly help the Government. He bided his time. He would not enter the legislature till the Congress lifted the boycott".[7] He was too cool-headed a person to be attracted by the emotional frenzy of the Khilafat movement, but, as Rushbrook-Williams points out, like Sir Muhammad Shafi and Sir Fazl-i Husain, he "was a tower of strength in striving to stem the migration,"[8] following the disastrous Hijrat decision. Even otherwise, he continued his efforts to help the national progress on constitutional lines. Jayakar's autobiography gives details of the steps taken by Jinnah to organise a broadbased party working for Indian independence through lawful methods. These efforts were not fruitful, but Jinnah continued to make his contribution as leader of the Independent Party in the Legislative Assembly. In addition there was another sphere in which he could make himself useful to his people. The country may have lost interest in the political methods, by which he and his colleagues had obtained Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, and wanted to secure full Home Rule, but he was still the Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity. He could yet help in lifting the major block which might hold up constitutional progress.

After a short interval in which the original programme of non-co-operation had to be radically modified, and the need for Hindu-Muslim unity became all the more pressing in view of the growing discord, Jinnah called a general meeting of the Muslim League, which had been virtually dormant during the excitement of Khilafat days. The session was held at Lahore in May 1924. Before

7. Ibid.

8. Rushbrook-Williams, *The State of Pakistan*, p. 19.

the proceedings commenced, Jinnah, in an interview with a press representative, outlined the objects, with which the session was being held. He said:

"The object of holding the session is to concentrate the united Muslim opinion with regard to:

(*i*) the question of the amendment of the constitution of India,

(*ii*) to bring about a friendly understanding, in the Punjab in particular, where owing to certain causes, which seem insignificant, a great deal of misunderstanding has been created between Hindus and Mussalmans, and

(*iii*) to bring about in due course, through and by means of the All-India Muslim League organisation, once more an amicable settlement between the Hindus and the Muslims, as was done at Lucknow in 1916."[9]

The fact that Jinnah, in giving the reasons for the revival of the Muslim League, was not indulging in any political window-dressing and was inspired by highest patriotic motives will be seen from his activities and speeches for many years, after this reorganisation. In the course of the discussion on the Indian Finance Bill in 1925, he said on the floor of the Legislative Assembly:

". . . I, Sir, stand here with a clear conscience and I say that I am a nationalist first, a nationalist second and a nationalist last. . . . I once more appeal to this House, whether you are a Mussalman or a Hindu, for God's sake do not import the discussion of communal matters into this House, and degrade this Assembly, which we desire should become a real National Parliament. Set an example to the outside world and our people!"[10]

Jinnah in his attempt to repeat his performance of the Lucknow Pact was faced with heavy odds, but for a time it seemed as if he would win through. The question of Muslim share in the next instalment of reforms was complicated by many temporary causes of friction—the Shuddhi and the Hindu Sangthan movements, Multan and Malabar riots, the excitement following scurrilous attacks on the Holy Prophet by Arya Samaj writers. The situation in the Punjab was at its worst. A courageous and competent Muslim, once the General Secretary of the Punjab

9. See M.H. Saiyid, op. cit., p. 305.

10. Quoted in *Eminent Mussalmans* (Natesan), p. 435.

Provincial Congress Committee, had decided to give the Muslims a share in services and educational institutions, on the basis agreed for representation in the legislature at Lucknow. This had completely upset the Hindu intelligentsia of the Punjab who, not content with a complete monopoly of trade and industry and the so-called "professions," were unwilling to give Muslims their due share even in public services.

All these causes created an atmosphere of ill-will and distrust, which was hardly conducive to the success of Jinnah's dream of Hindu-Muslim *entente*, but he persisted with his task, and nearly three years after the League session at Lahore, a conference of Muslim leaders was held under his presidentship in March 1927, and the Delhi (Muslim) Proposals were formulated. Under these proposals, the Muslims were to agree, on certain conditions, to give up one right, on which they had insisted, and to which the nationalists were wont to attribute the growing separatism of Muslims—the right of representation through separate electorates. The conditions, in return for which the basic right was to be surrendered, were not formidable, and were, in course of time, fulfilled in all except in one or two minor matters. Delhi Proposals were opposed by the Punjab Muslims, who insisted on separate electorates, but the Khilafat Conference and the All-India Muslim League endorsed them. Srinivas Iyengar, the President of the Indian National Congress, gave them his personal support, and the All-India Congress Committee, in a meeting held at Bombay in May 1927, passed a resolution unanimously accepting them.

The Delhi Proposals were again "welcomed" at the annual general session of the Indian National Congress, held at Madras, but, meantime, the wreckers had been at work. The formula was opposed by Dr Moonje and other Hindu Mahasabha leaders (whose party was probably going to lose as much as anyone else by the introduction of joint electorates). Jairamdas Daulatram, the Sind leader, also objected to the provision for separation of Sind. The Madras Congress, instead of accepting them finally, merely "welcomed" them, and referred the question to an All-Parties Conference, which again left the matter to the Nehru Committee.

It is amusing, in this connection, to read the remarks made by Pattabhi Sitaramaya, the official historian of the Indian National Congress, on the fate of this formula. He writes in his *History of the Congress*: "It is not evolution of a formula that was required but the approximation of the hearts, a clearing of the minds, of the two great communities."

Can forced pleading go further? Nobody denies the importance of "the union of hearts," but does that mean that formulas, which can form a basis for that, which can remove causes of friction and dispel suspicions, should be thrown away?

Jinnah's efforts for Hindu-Muslim unity had not received the response which they deserved, but he persevered. Soon the appointment of the Simon Commission gave him an opportunity for making another bid for the success of his mission. He joined hands with the Congress in boycotting the Commission, and tolerated a complete split within the Muslim League to be able to follow a common policy with the Indian National Congress. Sir Muhammad Shafi, who had been elected President of the League for 1927, and some of his co-workers who had lost all hopes of Hindu-Muslim agreement, felt that the Muslims must place their case before the Simon Commission. The other section of the League, however, under the leadership of Jinnah and Maulana Muhammad Ali, boycotted the Commission. The result was that there were two annual sessions of the League—one held under the presidentship of Sir Muhammad Shafi at Lahore and the other under the presidentship of Sir Muhammad Yaqub at Calcutta—where opposite views were expressed regarding the Simon Commission.

Shortly after this, Jinnah, along with Srinivas Iyengar, left for Europe, and in his absence the Nehru Committee published its report on the constitutional reforms. The report was denounced by almost all Muslim leaders, except the "Nationalist Muslims," who stood for "unqualified support" to its recommendations.[11] Maulana Shaukat Ali and Maulana Hasrat Mohani

11. All-India Muslim Nationalist Party was formally established in July 1929 by Dr M. A. Ansari, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Choudhry Khaliquzzaman and others.

condemned it, and Maulana Muhammad Ali, on return from Europe, denounced it in typically strong language. Jinnah was also discouraged, but he did not give up hope and suggested that some amendments to its recommendations might be adopted so as to make it acceptable to the Muslims. In December 1928, he went to Calcutta where a National Convention had been called to finally consider the Nehru Report. The sub-committee of the Convention turned down his amendments but Jinnah took up the matter in the open session. He argued ably and eloquently for the acceptance of his amendments, and received eloquent support from Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. In a speech, asking the delegates not to lose a sense of proportion in dealing with matters of detail, raised by Jinnah, Sapru appealed to the audience:

"Gentlemen, remember, it is not only our own countrymen but the whole world is watching you. If you leave this Pandal with failure, you will have done a great damage to the country, from which it may not recover for a quarter of a century. The simple position is that for the sake of settlement you are invited by Jinnah, however illogically and unreasonably, to agree to the proposition, which I consider is not inconsistent with the Nehru Report."

Sir Tej's advice fell on deaf ears. The delegates completely forgot that Jinnah represented the liberal wing of the Muslims, that already there was a powerful section of the community which had lost all hope of an agreement with the Hindus, and that if even his proposals were not accepted, there was no possibility, at all, of any Hindu-Muslim agreement. The most powerful speech against the proposals of Jinnah came from M.R. Jayakar. He argued like a clever lawyer, who can argue about anything, but the chief weapon in his armoury was the threat that if Jinnah's amendments were accepted, his Hindu Mahasabha friends would revolt, and urge "their violent and arrogant claims".

The Convention bowed to Jayakar's pleadings and threats. The amendments moved by Jinnah were thrown out and "a great damage," in the fateful words of Tej Bahadur Sapru, was done "to the country from which it" was not to "recover for a quarter of a century". Jinnah left the banks of the Hoogli, heart-broken and

convinced that his last self-imposed mission of Hindu-Muslim unity had been a complete failure. His reactions at this time have been recorded by Jamshed Nusserwanji, later a Mayor of Karachi, who went to see him off at the railway station :

"He was standing at the door of his first-class coupe compartment, and he took my hand. He had tears in his eyes, as he said, 'Jamshed, this is the parting of the ways.' " [12]

V. Wanderings in the Wilderness

The next few years constituted probably the most unhappy period in Jinnah's life. After the fiasco at Calcutta, there was nothing to do, but to rejoin those who, from the beginning, had distrusted the possibility of Hindu-Muslim unity. Maulana Muhammad Ali was another leader who had learnt a bitter lesson at Calcutta. Both he and Jinnah (along with the Jamia-tul-Ulama leaders) had kept aloof from the section represented by the Punjab Muslim leaders, but after being thoroughly disillusioned at Calcutta, they decided to close the Muslim ranks. On 31 December 1928 and 1 January 1929, an All-Parties Muslim Conference was held at Delhi, under the presidentship of H.H. The Aga Khan. This was probably the most representative Muslim gathering since the Simla Deputation, and included the representatives, amongst others, of the Khilafat Conference, the Jamia-tul-Ulama, and the All-India Muslim League (both Jinnah and Shafi sections). A long and comprehensive resolution was unanimously passed regarding the Muslim demands, which now included the ill-fated Delhi Proposals of March 1927 *plus* separate electorates.

The Muslim League held its annual session, which had been adjourned to see the results of the Calcutta convention, a few months later, and a resolution similar to the one passed at the Muslim Conference was adopted. Next year, Jinnah sailed for England to attend the Round Table Conference. He was, however, extremely unhappy and sore at heart. Even in the previous year, owing to the lukewarm reception given by the Congress

12. Hector Bolitho, *Jinnah, Creator of Pakistan*, p. 95.

leaders to his Delhi Proposals, and the growing communalism amongst the Muslims and the Hindus, he was very unhappy. Dewan Chaman Lal, who was a fellow-traveller on the boat which took him and Srinivas Iyengar to Europe in May 1928, wrote an article from which extensive excerpts were reproduced in Jinnah's biography written by his private secretary. In the course of his article, Chaman Lal wrote:

"Jinnah is frankly in a despondent mood. He is one of the few men who have no personal motives to nurse or personal aims to advance. His integrity is beyond question. And yet he has been the loneliest man!"[13]

The loneliness had increased since these lines were written, but Jinnah possessed a remarkable tenacity of purpose and great power of resilience. He had suffered great disappointment at Calcutta, but he did not give up the struggle for the two objects dear to his heart—the independence of his country and safeguarding of Muslim interests. As a matter of fact, the correspondence which passed between him and Lord Irwin has recently become available[14] and shows that in 1930 he was very active politically. He was opposed to the appointment of "all-White" Simon Commission, but he strove hard to get the proposal of a representative Round Table Conference accepted so that Indian leaders could discuss their country's future with British representatives across the table. His relations with Lord Irwin seem to have been particularly close and it would be interesting to quote from a letter which the Viceroy wrote (13 September 1930) to the Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin and some other British leaders regarding Jinnah:

"... I have seen a great deal of Jinnah from time to time and have met very few Indians with a more acute intellect or a more independent outlook—not of course that he always sees eye to eye with government! But he is not lacking in moral courage, has been very outspoken against civil disobedience and is genuinely anxious to find the way to settlement."[15]

13. Quoted in M.H. Saiyid, op. cit., p. 402.
14. Vide Waheed Ahmad, Ed., *Jinnah-Irwin Correspondence, 1927–30.*
15. Ibid., pp. 75–76.

One factor which enabled Jinnah (and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru) to play a constructive role was the fact that he rigidly stood apart from the Civil Disobedience movement which was launched by Mahatma Gandhi on 1 January 1930. Jinnah was a constitutionalist by temperament and training. He belonged to that group of liberals who were able to convince the British liberals like Edwin Montagu of the desirability of a marked advance on the road to freedom and believed that it was not necessary to break the law and create a spirit of lawlessness in the people to achieve India's freedom. Jinnah had nothing in common with the henchmen of the Government but he was equally opposed to unlawful and unconstitutional methods. His political philosophy is beautifully summed up in the telegram which he sent on 13 January 1932 to Sir Abdullah Haroon who had sought guidance from him:

"Musalmans [should] stand united. Urge demands [by] constitutional methods. Most unwise to join unlawful movements. Make clear we [are] not opposed [to] responsible self-government provided Muslim safeguards [are] embodied [in] constitution. *Don't play in hands [of] extremists [or] officials.*—Jinnah."[16]

Jinnah had worked hard for the calling of the Round Table Conference but he did not play a major role there. For one thing, the First Round Table Conference agreed to the inclusion of Indian princes within the framework of the Indian federation. Jinnah was opposed to this as, according to him, the association of the autocratic princes would dilute the democracy of the Indian Government. Another reason for Jinnah's failure to make a mark was that a few days after the assembling of the Second Round Table Conference (September 1931) a National Government was formed in England in which the Conservative Party secured a dominant voice. Jinnah could work closely with a man like Viceroy Irwin but had very little in common with Sir Samuel Hoare (later Lord Templewood) who became the Secretary of State for India in the new government and dominated the Round Table Conference. At the Third Round Table Conference, Hoare saw to it that Jinnah was not even invited!

At the Round Table Conference, the Muslim leadership pass-

16. Ahmed Shafi, *Haji Sir Abdullah Haroom: A Biography*, p. 96. Italics ours.

ed to His Highness The Aga Khan, who was perhaps even better suited than Jinnah for the negotiations that were to ensue. He played his cards remarkably well, and, with his suavity of manners and tact, and general attitude of helpfulness, kept the Muslim team solidly together—which was in visible contrast to the many and discordant voices, which spoke from the other camp. He tried to come to an understanding with Mahatma Gandhi on the Hindu-Muslim question, but when these talks proved unfruitful, he negotiated a Minorities Pact, by which all sections of the Indian political life, except the caste Hindus, joined hands with the Muslims. This facilitated the task of the British Premier, in giving his Communal Award in 1932, which met many of the Muslim demands.

At the Round Table Conference, Jinnah's role was apparently a minor one, but he persisted in his dual approach of supporting India's struggle for independence and safeguarding of Muslim interests. At the First Round Table Conference he helped in the evolution of a formula for Hindu-Muslim agreement, which was vetoed by M.R. Jayakar. Again, when at the Second Round Table Conference (in November 1931) the Hindu-Muslim negotiations broke down, some Muslim members of the Conference (including Iqbal) favoured the stand that, in view of this, the Federal Structure Committee should disperse without discussing other aspects of the Indian constitutional problem. At this stage, Jinnah took the initiative[17] in persuading other members of the Muslim delegation to modify their stand. In the Federal Struc-

17. The present writer who was in England at this time learnt from Iqbal himself, who stated that when the breakdown of the Round Table Conference over Hindu-Muslim question appeared likely and Muslim delegates had, more or less, decided to urge this, Jinnah was approached by Mrs Sarojini Naidu to "avert this disaster". Iqbal was unhappy at this and the reference (in the statement he issued at this time) to Jinnah's intervention in the Federal Structure Sub-Committee was marked by critical irony, but before long he was to know Jinnah more fully and appreciate his sterling qualities. The climax was reached in 1937 when Iqbal approached Jinnah as "the only Muslim in India today to whom the community has the right to look up for safe guidance through the storm which is coming to North-Western India," but the basis for an understanding had been laid in London itself!

ture Sub-Committee he indicated that the Muslim representatives would meet separately, when he urged that they should not take the responsibility for the breakdown of the Round Table Conference and should not bar discussion of other items though they should make it clear that no scheme of constitutional reforms would be acceptable to them without a satisfactory solution of Muslim demands. In general, the Muslim delegation seems to have accepted this view which was expressed even more forcefully by Sir Muhammad Shafi in the next meeting of the Committee, but Iqbal and a few other delegates took a different view. The value which the Muslim leaders attached to Jinnah's views and powers of intellect may be seen from a letter written to him by The Aga Khan, the leader of the Muslim delegation. Jinnah was not invited to the Third Round Table Conference, but the delegates requested him to attend informally their meetings and help them by his advice. Jinnah attended some such meetings and the value attached to his participation may be seen from The Aga Khan's letter:

"My dear Jinnah,

We specially missed you much this afternoon—you know how much I rely on your cold common-sense judgement. A great deal of our unity is due to the dissecting which wild schemes get from your criticisms. Hope on important meetings you may come. We have 5 new Moslem members. Till they come into government [*sic*] we will need you more than ever. Yours very sincerely,

Aga Khan."[18]

This letter is undated, but presumably was written, when, after attending a few meetings of the Muslim delegation, Jinnah discontinued doing so.

Jinnah was not invited to the Third Round Table Conference, but he was now residing in England, and had opportunities of meeting the delegates from India. An important contact, which he effectively renewed during this period was with Sir Muhammad Iqbal, who had come as a delegate to the Round Table Conference. Jinnah was the principal speaker at a reception given in honour of the poet by Iqbal Literary Association and thereafter

18. Mukhtar Masood, Ed., *Eye Witnesses of History*, p. 1.

invited him to lunch at his house. Thus began a series of meetings which were to leave a mark on the course of India's history. Jinnah was not now a delegate to the Round Table Conference, but during the first session, which he attended, he had criticised the conception of the central federation, which other delegates had supported enthusiastically. His objections were partly from the nationalist angle—the inclusion of the autocratic princes at the centre would "water down democracy"—and partly from the Muslim point of view—a strong centre would nullify the provincial autonomy which the Muslims valued so much. Iqbal, on the other hand, had, a few years before, held out his plan for a Muslim *bloc* in the north-west. This did not receive much consideration at the Round Table Conference, but the separation of Sind and grant of full reforms to the North-West Frontier Province were bound to pave the way for its fulfilment. This plan the poet must have discussed with Jinnah, who was, at long last, convinced that in its amplified form lay the only hope for a contented, peaceful India in general and for the bulk of Indian Muslims in particular.

Iqbal had got Jinnah seriously interested in what came to be known as the "Pakistan Scheme," but even then he did not return to India to take it up. He was biding his time, watching events, brooding on them, and all the time most unhappy. During the course of a brief visit to Oxford in 1932, he said to the present writer, with great anguish of soul:

> "But what is to be done? The Hindus are short-sighted and, I think, incorrigible. The Muslim camp is full of those spineless people who, whatever they may say to me, will consult the Deputy Commissioner about what they should do! Where is, between these two groups, any place for a man like me?"

Meanwhile he was getting reports from India that Indian Muslims were a flock of sheep without a shepherd. The Aga Khan's leadership had its limitations, as he wanted the palm without the dust, and could not give up the health resorts of France and Switzerland to lead a popular movement. Maulana Muhammad Ali was dead. So was Sir Muhammad Shafi, and even if he had been alive, he was too closely associated with a

pro-British policy to inspire general enthusiasm. The League and the Muslim Conference had become the plaything of petty leaders who would not resign office, even after a vote of no-confidence! And, of course, they had no organisation in the provinces and no influence with the masses.

It was in these circumstances that certain well-wishers of the Muslims turned towards Jinnah. They requested him to return to India, and once again lead the army which was fast becoming a rabble. Jinnah relented, but even now he would visit India only for a few months and return to England again. In 1934, however, he was elected the permanent president of the All-India Muslim League, and he finally returned to India in October 1935.

In 1935–36 Jinnah played an important, almost a dominant, role in the Central Legislative Assembly. He had been elected to the Assembly at the end of 1934 and took early steps to revive the Independent Party. At that time the Congress members in the House numbered forty-four while another eleven members belonged to the (pro-Congress) Nationalist Party. Against this strength of fifty-five, the official *bloc*, the Europeans and the nominated members, had a strength of fifty. Between them, the Independent Party which had a membership of twenty-two held the balance of power. Jinnah worked with the Congress-cum-Nationalist group and the Government suffered one defeat after another. The budget had to be certified by the Viceroy in 1934 as well as 1935, and the Ottawa Pact to which the Government had attached so much importance was thrown out. Sir Reginald Coupland, reviewing the developments in 1935–36 observes:

"Never before, in fact, had the nationalist Opposition pressed the Government so hard as it did in this brief period of Hindu-Muslim co-operation."[19]

About Jinnah's own attitude in 1934 (and 1935) Coupland says:

" . . . it was soon evident that Mr. Jinnah who had again become President of the Muslim League in 1934 was prepared to revive the *entente* of the Lucknow Pact period in the common

19. Sir Reginald Coupland, *India—A Restatement*, p. 151.

cause of nationalism."[20]

This was a critical period in the national history as new reforms on the basis of Government of India Act of 1935 were to be introduced, but Muslims in the Punjab were preoccupied with the agitation regarding the Shaheed Ganj mosque. The mosque had been demolished, after a court judgment, under the orders of Governor Emerson, but Muslims were very much agitated and a large-scale agitation was in progress. Muslim dissatisfaction had a solid basis, but it has been said that the agitation was also encouraged to involve certain political parties—e.g. Ahrars—by their opponents. The Quaid-i Azam felt as a lawyer that, after the court decision, the Muslims could get relief only by some understanding with the other party. He was also unhappy that at a time when the elections under the new Act were to be fought, politically active groups amongst the Muslims were preoccupied with a local problem. As stated by M.H. Saiyid, who was Jinnah's Private Secretary at one time and wrote his biography in his lifetime (at the end of 1944), says:

> "In the opinion of Jinnah it was an unfortunate affair specially at a time when the whole energy of Muslims was required to harness their strength for utilising what little opportunities were provided to India by the Act of 1935."[21]

When the parties involved in the Shaheed Ganj agitation called upon him to settle the dispute, he lost no time in proceeding to Lahore. He laboured for a number of days talking and discussing the problem with the leaders of all groups and communities without being able to solve the main issue. He was, however, able to produce an atmosphere of amity and goodwill. The Government expressed its inability to force the Sikhs in the dispute on which the High Court had given a decision in their favour, but on its part Government met all the Muslim demands so far as they concerned the authorities. "The Punjab Government decided to release all persons convicted of offences directly connected with the Shahidganj agitation and not involved in serious violence to

20. Ibid., p. 150. 21. M.H. Saiyid, op. cit., p. 530.

person or property or abetment of such violence."[22] They also decided to withdraw pending cases and revoke action taken under the Indian Press Act. This followed a declaration by Jinnah in the Badshahi Mosque on behalf of all sections of the Muslim community that after consultation with the leaders it had been decided that Civil Disobedience was to be stopped.

Jinnah had realised that any further progress in the Shaheed Ganj affair could be made only with the Sikh collaboration. So he constituted a Shaheed Ganj Conciliation Committee consisting of Iqbal, Maulvi Abdul Qadir Qasuri, Nanak Chand Pandit, Sardar Boota Singh, Sardar Ujjal Singh and Sardar Sampuran Singh, with Nawab Ahmad Yar Daultana as convenor to try and find an agreed formula acceptable to all parties.

Jinnah worked hard for several weeks for solving the Shaheed Ganj dispute and, though the basic object of the Muslims was not gained, there was a great improvement in the atmosphere and a somewhat graceful end was brought to an agitation which was not leading anywhere, and was diverting Muslim energies from the momentous political issues confronting them. This was, incidentally, one occasion when Jinnah thanked the Governor and the Government of the Punjab for the help and assistance, and the Governor also in a speech at the European Club Dinner paid a high tribute to Jinnah. In the course of his speech he said: "I am greatly indebted to the efforts of Mr. Jinnah for this improvement and I wish to pay an unqualified tribute to the work he has done and is doing."[23]

Jinnah began to reorganise the All-India Muslim League. Its annual session was held at Bombay in April 1936, under the presidentship of Sir Wazir Hasan, and its constitution was revised to make it a more democratic and living organisation. Steps were also taken, for the first time, to set up a machinery for contesting elections on behalf of the Muslim League.

A central election board with provincial branches was set up to take in hand arrangements for fighting the provincial elections under the Government of India Act of 1935. Jinnah toured the

22. Ibid., p. 531. 23. Ibid., p. 536.

country to canvass support for the League candidates, but his efforts were only partially successful. In the Punjab, he had the constant support of Iqbal, but could not come to an agreement with Sir Fazl-i Husain, the Unionist leader, and the League fared very badly in that "key" province. Experience in Bengal was only slightly better. In the elections, the League was actively assisted by the Jamia-tul-Ulama, and had generally the goodwill of the Congress, which had been receiving support from Jinnah's Independent Party in the Central Legislative Assembly, but it failed to make much headway against firmly entrenched provincial parties.

In the meanwhile Jinnah had made his own contribution to the safeguarding of Muslim interests. He strengthened his Independent Party in the Central Legislative Assembly and was able to get an elaborate resolution passed by the Assembly accepting the Communal Award, in the absence of agreement between the parties.

The Rallying Post. The provincial elections of 1937 produced many surprises. The League had not come out with flying colours. The Congress, on the other hand, achieved a success which neither its supporters nor its opponents had anticipated. Most provincial Governors and British officials expected at the provincial elections a repetition of the previous elections to the Central Legislature, when Congress had won about 50% of the Hindu seats. They looked to the provincial parties, which they encouraged in various areas—the Unionists in the Punjab, the Justice Party in Madras, the Zamindars and the Nationalist Party in U.P., the Marathas in Bombay—and were sure that, although the Congress may be the largest single party, it would have to depend on others to form ministries. Here they were to be completely disillusioned. The organising ability of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, who had succeeded Dr Ansari as the chairman of the parliamentary board, the army of the workers which the Congress had built up during the previous twenty years, the magic name of a Mahatma, and the whirlwind tours of the president, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, completely upset the official calculations. The Congress triumphed in all the Hindu provinces and even in the North-West Frontier!

There is no doubt that this unexpected success went to the head of the Congress leaders. Before and even during the elections, they were friendly to the Muslim League. Now they were cold and distant. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru declared at Calcutta that there were only two parties in the country—the British and the Congress. The League had fared so badly at the elections that it was not necessary to acknowledge its existence. To this attitude of high disdain, two other factors contributed. The Congress president was surrounded by certain left-wing—almost de-Muslimised—Muslims, who later left even the Congress fold for the Communist ranks. They urged on Nehru, that it was "medieval" to recognise political parties based on religion, and the Congress had only to organise vigorous Muslim Mass Contact movement to achieve the same success amongst the Muslims, which it had gained among the Hindus. Nehru was carried away by these visions, and an open breach occurred between the Congress and the League.

The decision of the Jamia-tul-Ulama-i Hind, taken on 17 May 1937 to leave the Muslim League Parliamentary Board and to join hands with the Congress, further strengthened the latter in its new attitude towards the League.

The personality of the chairman of the Congress parliamentary board was another factor which drove the Congress away from the League. Sardar Patel was a great organiser but for a man of his ability and importance, he was amazingly ill-informed about the background of Muslim politics, and even otherwise perhaps freedom from communalism was not one of his many gifts. He was at this time at the summit of his power, and as the chairman of the Congress parliamentary board, bossed over all governments in the Congress provinces. He had to decide the question of Muslim representation in provincial governments, and he dealt with the problem in his usual, firm and unimaginative way. If he had faced the question in a spirit of statesmanship, he could have seen that Sir Sikandar Hayat and other Muslim premiers had already tackled the corresponding Hindu problem in the Muslim provinces, in a manner which could be a very safe guide to the Congress. Sir Sikandar Hayat's party was in absolute

majority in the Punjab Assembly, but he offered the Hindu seat in the Government to the Hindu Mahasabha, and, although Raja Narendara Nath, the president of the Hindu Party, was unable to accept it owing to old age, his nominee, Sir Manohar Lal, was appointed a minister. There was really no other way to give honest, real, representation to the minorities. If a minister had to be taken, not on account of affiliation to the party or any other personal claim, but to represent the minorities, it was obvious that he should be their genuine representative and not a stooge of the party in power. This the iron-willed Sardar would not—or could not—grasp. Under the constitution, representation had to be given to the minorities. So he was prepared to have Muslim ministers—even from the Muslim League,—but, then, they must resign from the League, sign the Congress pledge, and abide by its discipline. In other words, the minority representatives were not to represent the minorities but the Congress!

The behaviour of the "Congress High Command" at the time of the ministry-making in U.P. in 1937 has been described at length.[24] What is not so well known is that somewhat similar developments took place in Bombay. This has been revealed by Kanji Dwarkadas in his eminently fair and informative *India Fights for Freedom*, and as the book is not available in Pakistan the relevant paragraph may be quoted *in extenso*:

"Kher, the Chief Minister-designate [of Bombay], before forming the Ministry, saw Jinnah. He requested Jinnah to give him two members of his Muslim League to join the Ministry. Jinnah readily agreed and offered his and the Muslim League's fullest co-operation to the Congress Ministry. But what happened? Kher told me the whole story and latter Jinnah confirmed it. The High Command, Sardar Patel in particular, took Kher to task for having approached Jinnah. The High Command wanted no truck with Jinnah. So, Kher's request for two Muslim Leaguers in the Ministry was turned into a demand by the Congress that the Muslim Leaguers must resign from the Muslim League and join the Congress and then only would they be taken as Ministers! This was a humiliating condition for the Muslim League to accept. Jinnah rightly resented it. He therefore summarily rejected the

24. E.g. by Choudhry Khaliquzzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan*, pp. 160-61.

Congress suggestion. He wanted to co-operate with the Congress but not by liquidating and sabotaging his own party."[25]

In imposing his iron discipline, the Sardar had some initial difficulties. The Muslim League had not done well in predominantly Muslim areas, but it had won the vast majority of seats in the Congress provinces. In some of these—like Bombay—not a single Muslim had been returned on the Congress ticket. So what was to be done about the representation of Muslims in the Governments of these provinces? The problem was somewhat complicated, but the efficient, resourceful Sardar was not going to be baffled by these difficulties. He offered the ministry to any Tom, Dick or Harry amongst the Muslim members who was prepared to sign the Congress pledge, and so the farce of Muslim representation was complete.

Pyarelal, the private secretary of Mahatma Gandhi, has revealed that the "decision of the Congress High Command" was "taken against Gandhiji's best judgment". He refers to the desire of the Muslim Leaguers to join "hands with the Congress" and continues to say:

"They were prepared to join hands with the Congress as members of a Coalition Government in carrying out Congress policies so long as they were not required to sign the Congress pledge. . . . The Congress would have liked to accommodate them but it was afraid of introducing into the fortress the Trojan horse of the Muslim Leaguers with the British influence ensconced in its belly. And so the Congress Ministries were formed without the Muslim League. This decision of the Congress High Comimand taken against Gandhiji's best judgment proved a tactcal error of the first magnitude. The proferred hand which the Congress found itself compelled to reject, the British Power was but too glad firmly to grasp."[26]

It only remains to be pointed out that the argument about the Muslim League being under British influence is not valid. As Sir James Grigg, the Finance Member of the Government of India, has stated, at this time Mr Jinnah's "anti-British record was almost as clear as Gandhi's own," and League's collabora-

25. Kanji Dwarkadas, *India Fights for Freedom*, pp. 466–67.
26. Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi : The Last Phase*, I, 76.

tors were Ahrars and Jamia-tul-Ulama leaders. The loyalists came in after the Congress had rejected League's offer of co-operation and the break between the two was complete.

The procedure adopted was, of course, a negation of the constitutional safeguards for the Muslims, but it was also less than fair to the Muslim League. Before the elections the Congress and Jinnah's Independent Party had closely collaborated with each other in the Central Legislative Assembly and many Congress resolutions against the Government succeeded only on account of Jinnah's support. Their relations during the elections were also friendly. Later, when after the elections in 1937, the Congress, at first, refused to accept office, and the Governors called the League leaders, as representing the next largest party, to form what were called Interim Ministries, Jinnah would not allow this. It is known that, in some cases, the leaders of the League parties in the provincial legislatures (e.g. Sir Ali Muhammad Khan Dehlavi in Bombay) were quite willing—even keen—to become premiers but Jinnah overruled them. He would not profit by the Congress refusal to come in, or do anything which might jeopardise the prospects of an effective League-Congress collaboration on which his heart was set.

The Congress leaders, however, when it was their turn to be invited by the Governors, completely ignored the Muslim League. This must have hurt Jinnah; what followed was calculated to rouse his ire still further. The Congress governments had taken one false step in taking, as Muslim ministers, persons who did not command the confidence of the Muslims in the legislature. This false step was succeeded by many more of the same type. In the absence of a true Muslim representative in the Cabinet, the Congress governments had nobody to advise them about the views of the Muslims when they took decisions affecting the general population. The so-called "Muslim Minister" knew very well that he was governed by the Congress pledge, and the iron discipline of that party. He usually represented himself alone, and lacked that moral courage which comes from having "big battalions at one's back". In many cases, he was just a new-comer to the Congress ranks, avowedly for the sake of the office

—and did not carry with his colleagues in the Cabinet anything of the influence which a Syed Mahmud or a Yaqub Hasan would carry. Bereft of any following and any mission, that he was to watch the Muslim interests—and in many cases, even the support of a contented conscience—the Muslim Minister was a pathetic figure, and deprived of his frank advice, the Congress governments took several steps which caused deep resentment amongst the Muslims. When the Congress ministries resigned office in 1939, a "Day of Deliverance" was observed by the Muslims—as well as by Hindu untouchables—and Pirpur Committee has reported on the hardships to which Muslims were exposed under the Congress rule.

The second half of the year 1937 was one of the darkest periods through which the Indian Muslims had had to pass since 1857. Their central political organisation had failed to show any effectiveness at the polls. Over the greater part of the country, where the Congress ministries held sway, they felt that the Hindu Raj had come. They suddenly realised that all the fears, which Syed Ahmad Khan and Viqar-ul-Mulk had expressed about their future, were coming true. They were most disheartened and sore at heart. They saw no way out of their predicament and thought that soon the Congress, with its vast organisation and policy of corrupting a few ambitious, unprincipled Muslims, would extend its sway even over the Muslim majority provinces, and the whole country would become a vast prison-house for them.

The prospects for the Muslims were most gloomy, and many faint hearts began to suggest that they should settle with the Congress, on its own terms. There was, however, one light which burned bright and clear. Jinnah has been called a proud and haughty person, and this trait of character may have caused him and his people occasional difficulties. This was, however, the time when just these qualities were needed. In the midst of the storm he stood like a rock. He was the proud representative of a proud people, and he hurled defiance at the pretensions and the dreams of the Congress. He was not going to lower his flag to come to terms with the Congress. Far from his accepting conditions, while

being offered seats in the Congress governments, it would be he who would impose conditions!

The Indian Muslims are not likely to forget the resolute stand which Jinnah, without any visible following, without much support in the legislatures and, inspired solely by his sense of duty and his faith in his people, took at this juncture. But there was another great Muslim who, although in the background, gave Jinnah powerful and effective moral support. Jinnah has written about Iqbal: "To me, he was a friend, guide and philosopher, and during the darkest moments through which the Muslim League had to go, he stood like a rock and never flinched one single moment."

Gradually the darkness began to lift. The Muslims saw the light and rallied round. The Muslims in the majority provinces saw what was happening to their co-religionists in the Congress provinces and were deeply touched. They now realised that, except through a powerful all-India organisation, they had no means of saving themselves. So after having decisively defeated the League in the elections, the Muslim premiers of the Punjab and Bengal came to terms with Jinnah, and agreed to abide by the policy and decisions of the All-India Muslim League in all-India matters.

These decisions which were announced at the annual session of the League, held at Lucknow in October 1937, not only opened a new chapter for the League but marked a turning point in the history of Muslim India. The session was held in the face of heavy odds but, thanks to the help of the young Raja of Mahmudabad, the arrangements were perfect. Jinnah, in his presidential address, hurled defiance at the Congress, but now it was not the defiance of one who had nothing but faith and courage to succour him. He had the premiers of the Punjab and Bengal on his right and left, and he knew that he had the support of almost every self-respecting Muslim. Muslim India had rallied round the rallying-post!

Search for Security. The significance of the Lucknow session of the League was not lost on the Congress leaders. They realised that their treatment of the Muslims in the Congress provinces had been taken as a challenge by the entire Muslim India, which was prepared to meet it. The firm, disciplinarian policy of the iron

dictator—the Sardar—had given results quite different from what he expected. Thinking Hindus began to criticise the want of statesmanship shown by the Congress leadership in dealing with the Muslims. Tairsee, president of Hindu Gymkhana of Bombay, criticised, in the columns of *The Bombay Chronicle*, the unstatesmanlike attitude which the Congress leadership had shown in refusing genuine representation to the Muslims in Congress cabinets. Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar of the Punjab expressed the same view in a long letter to Mahatma Gandhi. Sir Chiman Lal Sitalvad criticised the unhappy developments in the presidential address delivered in December 1937 at the Calcutta session of All-India Liberal Federation and contrasted the unwise rigidity shown by the Congress leaders with the statesmanship displayed by the Muslim premiers like Sir Sikandar Hayat.

The Congress leaders realised that they had blundered and appeared willing to take Muslim representatives in the Congress cabinets on less exacting terms. Now, it was Jinnah's turn to be firm and unbending. The numerous unity talks, which started between him and the Congress leaders, usually broke down on the question of the representative character of the Muslim League. His plea was that in 1916, when alone there was an agreement between Hindus and Muslims, the League had been taken as the sole and authoritative representative of the Muslims, and the Congress should now acknowledge its position in the same way. This the Congress considered incompatible with its claim of speaking on behalf of entire India, and the negotiations broke down. Perhaps the truth is that what had happened in 1937 had not only embittered Jinnah but had convinced him that there was no safety for the Muslims in the goodwill of the Congress or the Hindus. They must devise more drastic devices for their safety—or perish.

As soon as the reorganisation of the Muslim League was complete after the Lucknow session, Jinnah took up the question of the determination of the Muslim objective, in order that their position under the future constitution might be safe. In the Provincial Muslim Conference held at Karachi in October 1938, a resolution was passed suggesting to the All-India Muslim League that it should review the entire question of the future constitution

for India, and suggest something which would secure the honourable status due to the Muslims. "Sind resolution also suggested that Hindus and Muslims were separate nations." Accordingly, a sub-committee was appointed to examine the question, and its report was, in due course, considered by the working committee of the All-India Muslim League. The sub-committee recommended the creation of a separate Muslim State as the only effective safeguard against the Muslims being submerged by the Hindus and permanently suffering the hardships of which they had had a foretaste in 1937.

The conclusions of the sub-committee were published—unauthorisedly, it appears—in the press, but the Congress leaders ignored them. They were, however, shaken when at its annual general session, held at Lahore in March 1940, the All-India Muslim League formulated its political objectives.

The League at this historic session adopted "the Lahore Resolution, popularly known as the Pakistan Resolution". [27] It laid down that in the future constitutioual arrangements for the country' "the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the North-Western and Eastern Zones of India, should be grouped to constitute Independent States". The resolution was moved by Fazl-ul-Haq, Chief Minister of Bengal, and supported by principal Muslim leaders from all provinces. It was passed unanimously and being confirmed next year, by incorporation within the constitution of the Muslim League, became the guiding star of the Muslim India.

Little did those who rejected Jinnah's hand of friendship in the National Convention of December 1928, and in 1937 treated the Muslims in an offensive dictatorial manner, realise that they were sowing the wind and would reap a whirlwind!

27. For a long time the Muslim League was chary of calling the Lahore Resolution as the Pakistan Resolution. Hindu press started to give it that designation to scare the non-Muslims. Later, the League leaders accepted this nomenclature. Perhaps, the correct thing is to designate the resolution of 1940 as the Lahore Resolution (as originally Muslim League was doing) and that of the Muslim Legislators' Convention (1946) as the Pakistan Resolution.

VI. The Struggle for Pakistan

After March 1940, Jinnah's course became clear. The Muslim League had adopted the conferment of independent status on contiguous Muslim majority areas, i.e. Pakistan, as its goal, and he strove for its achievement with the same tenacity of purpose and singlemindedness with which, some years earlier, he had pursued his dream of Hindu-Muslim unity. All his efforts after that day, his interviews, his speeches, his negotiations, and his strategic moves were inspired by one idea—to achieve this end.

To attain his object, he had to bring all the Muslims within his fold, and make them disciplined soldiers. This was not so easy. The vast majority of the Muslims felt attached to the League, but their loyalty was of emotional—if not a fragile—nature. Even in the case of old Leaguers this loyalty could be severely strained by personal whims or minor differences of opinion—to speak nothing of narrow self-interest. The majority of the Muslim members in the provincial legislature were not originally elected on the League ticket, and though, after the Lucknow session, they had signed the League pledge, they thought lightly of their new obligations. Jinnah's first efforts were directed towards enforcement of party discipline, and though this, later, led to a rupture between the League and the Unionists in the Punjab, Jinnah directed his efforts wisely, and was eminently successful.

The first indication that the Indian Muslims were nearing their goal of a separate state came in March 1942[28] when, alarmed by the war situation in South-East Asia, the British Government made an effort to come to a settlement with the Indian political parties and Sir Stafford Cripps was sent with a Declaration known as the Cripps Offer. The proposals brought by Sir Stafford Cripps, which were published on 20 March 1942, provided for Indian independence after the war and conceded the right of self-determi-

28. About the same time President Roosevelt wrote to Chiang Kai-Shek "that a solution of the Indian problem might be found in dividing India into two, namely Muslim and Hindu". This was communicated by Madame Chiang Kai-Shek to Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru in her letter of 13 March 1942 (*vide* Jawaharlal Nehru, *A Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 477).

nation to the provincial units. As under the proposed arrangements provinces were free to remain within India or opt out of the Indian Union, the provinces where Muslims were in a majority could presumably form their own federation—i.e. Pakistan—in due course. V.P. Menon, who may be taken as the spokesman of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, says that the British Government Declaration of 1942 "was really the death-blow to Indian unity. . . ."[29] The Cripps Offer was rejected by the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League for different reasons, and was ultimately withdrawn, but the declaration of the policyof the British Government—which, at that time, contained representatives of all parties—was an important milestone on the road to Pakistan.

Soon after the return of Sir Stafford Cripps, the Indian National Congress launched a "Quit India" movement and the important Congress leaders were taken into custody. This was followed by a lull in the constitutional activities, which continued more or less till the end of the Second World War. Shortly, however, before the cessation of the hostilities, Gandhi was released from the jail, ostensibly for health reasons, and he started negotiations with Jinnah on the basis of a limited right of self-determination in the Muslim-majority areas. As, however, Gandhi wanted to reserve Defence, Foreign Affairs, and even Commerce and Customs for the combined Government of India and Pakistan and insisted on the division of Bengal and Punjab, Jinnah did not accept this "maimed, mutilated and moth-eaten" Pakistan, and the negotiations had to be abandoned. Besides, all this was to come about after the British left. An effort by the new Viceroy of India, Lord Wavell, to straighten out the constitutional problem at a conference called at Simla in June 1945 failed to produce better results.

In the meanwhile the war ended in Europe and, as a result of general elections in Britain, the Labour Party came to power with an overwhelming majority in the House of Commons. Many of the Socialist leaders knew the prominent Congress chiefs personally and had frequently expressed themselves in favour of Indian inde-

29. V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India*, p. 438.

pendence. The Labour Party, therefore, decided to push forward with the constitutional changes and as a preliminary measure ordered general elections in India. The Indian National Congress was claiming that it had the support of all sections of the Indian public, including the Muslims, while the Muslim League claimed that it represented an overwhelming majority of the Muslim community, and it was thought that the general elections would give the political parties a good opportunity to establish their claims. The result of the elections held at the end of 1945 and the beginning of 1946 was a single victory for the All-India Muslim League. In the Central Assembly Muslim League won all the seats, which were to be filled entirely by Muslim votes, and in Punjab, Bengal and Sind it secured the vast majority of the Muslim seats. In N.-W.F.P. also the League polled more votes than the Indian National Congress, but owing to the presence in the provincial assembly of Hindu members, completely out of proportion to their population and certain other factors, it could not form a ministry in that province. Generally speaking, however, the Muslim League made good its claim to represent the Muslims.

After the elections, the newly elected Muslim legislators met at a Convention on 8, 9, 10 April 1946 at Delhi. The main resolution which was moved by Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy marked the final crystallisation of the Muslim demand, and indicated the lines on which Pakistan actually came into existence in 1947. The Lahore Resolution of 1940 urged that contiguous Muslim majority areas in the North-West and East "should be grouped to constitute independent states". It spoke of states and not a state. Later, the Quaid-i Azam is reported to have thought that this was a printing error, but there are other documents in which the expression "states" occurs and some semi-authentic writings in which details of the two states are also given. Apparently, it was taken for granted that the independent states "will form units for Pakistan," as stated by the Quaid in reply to Mahatma Gandhi in September 1944. By 1946, either the need to remove this confusion or printing error was felt, or public opinion had got ready for the idea of a single sovereign state comprising the zones in the north-east and the north-west. Steps to formalise

the position were taken at the Convention, which resolved that "the zones comprising Bengal and Assam in the north-east and the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan in the north-west of India, namely, Pakistan zones, where the Muslims are in a dominant majority, be constituted into a sovereign independent State". Incidentally, it may be noticed that both the Lahore Resolution and the resolution at the Convention were moved by the Chief Ministers of Bengal. In the evolution of Pakistan there was no demand from any area to bring in any other area against its will, and the whole scheme grew voluntarily and gradually.

After these preliminaries were over, the Labour Government sent a Cabinet Mission consisting of three senior Ministers, viz. A.V. Alexander, Sir Stafford Cripps and Lord Pethick-Lawrence, to settle the Indian question on the spot. The All-India Muslim League, the Indian National Congress, and other parties placed their cases before the Mission. As the parties were unable to come to an agreement, the Cabinet Mission put forward its own solution, which was a sort of compromise between Congress and League points of view. Under the formula suggested by the Cabinet Mission, India was not to be partitioned and there was to be one Central Government to deal with Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications. The Muslim League demand was partially met by the formation of the provincial Groups and by providing that the Group Governments could deal with such subjects as were delegated to them by the provinces. Both the League and the Congress originally accepted the Cabinet Mission Plan, but the Congress acted in a manner which came as a surprise to many an impartial observer. It accepted the Cabinet Mission Plan, but put forward its own interpretation on the terms of the Plan and insisted that even the authors of the Plan had no right to explain it, and the authoritative statements made by them at the time of the presentation of the Plan, etc., which alone were responsible for its acceptance by the League, would not hold good. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru gave an example of the way in which the Congress wished to interpret the terms of the Plan by saying that the "Foreign Affairs" included not only foreign relations but foreign

trade and even customs and currency questions. The Congress obviously aimed at nullifying the provisions regarding Grouping and wished to establish a strong centre, in spite of the clear statements made by the authors of the scheme. The Muslims, therefore, had to consider their position and at its session held in Bombay, on 27 July 1946, when important Muslim leaders renounced their coveted titles and distinctions conferred on them by the British Government, the Council of the Muslim League unanimously adopted a resolution withdrawing its approval of the Cabinet Mission Plan.

The extraordinary bahaviour of the Congress leaders with regard to the Cabinet Mission Plan had far-reaching results. Those who were in touch with the Quaid state that it was this behaviour which clinched the issue of Pakistan. He was equally angry with the Viceroy for not implementing his original proclamation of forming the Interim Government with the help of parties which genuinely accepted the long-term and short-term plans of the Cabinet Mission. The Bombay session of the Council of Muslim League which withdrew approval of the Cabinet Mission Plan was marked by blunt, forthright speeches. The Muslim League which had hitherto followed strictly constitutional methods felt that it had to make domonstrations and may even have to resort to "direct action" which the Congress had frequently adopted to exhibit its strength and apply pressure. The Quaid publicly accused the Viceroy of double-crossing, and wrote to him on 31 July rejecting his offer to join the Executive Council.[30] According to A.K. Majumdar, "Wavell now obtained the Secretary of State's permission to form a Government with the Congress

30. Based on conversations with I.I. Chundrigar and Chaudhri Muhammad Ali. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad also says that Mr Jinnah "argued" that if the Congress could behave in this way "while the British were still in the country and power had not come to its hands, what assurance could the minorities have that, once the British left, the Congress would not again change . . . " (*India Wins Freedom*, pp. 157–58). According to Chundrigar, the Quaid became perturbed about similar behaviour by the Congress, when it got control over the army.

alone in case the Muslim League refused to join it."[31] Dr Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, however, says that the Secretary of State "ordered Wavell to invite Nehru to form the Government".[32] On 12 August a Communique was issued to the effect that Nehru had accepted the Viceroy's invitation. This greatly heightened the mounting tension. Still, the Direct Action Day which the Muslim League had fixed for 16 August to observe *hartal* and hold meetings to enunciate its new policy passed off peacefully throughout the country except in Calcutta where Hindus objected to the *hartal* organised by the League and clashes led to serious Hindu-Muslim riots resulting in heavy casualties to both communities, particularly the Muslims. This was followed by a chain reaction in Noakhali and some othar districts of East Bangal. On 2 September 1946, Interim Government was formed at Delhi, with Nehru becoming Vice-President of the Viceroy's Executive Council. The Viceroy continued negotiations with the Quaid to persuade the League to enter the Interim Government.

His determination to play fair and really solve India's problems ultimately cost Wavell his viceroyalty. He had already angered Gandhi and other Congress leaders on 27 August when he spoke to them as "a simple soldier" and wanted them to talk to him "like honest men who are interested in India's future and welfare". He pointed out that Grouping was "implicit" in the Cabinet Mission Plan and said to them: "When Congress accepted the Cabinet Mission Plan in the first place, I cannot believe that you did so not knowing its implications." He wanted them to sign a brief declaration to make clear their acceptance of Grouping as envisaged by the Cabinet Mission. This the Congress leaders refused to do, and Wavell observed : "In the circumstanecs, I feel that it would be unwise, even perilous, if I allowed Congress to form an interim Government on its own."[33]

31. A.K. Majumdar, *The Advent of Independence*, p. 239.

32. Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, *The Struggle for Pakistan*, p. 278, footnote 25.

33. Leonard Mosley, *The Last Days of the British Raj*, p. 44. According to Menon, Viceroy's threat was about not "summoning the Constituent Assembly until this point [about Grouping] was settled". As Gandhi's letter written next day to Viceroy also referred to the threat regarding the Con-

The above account of discussions is based on Mosley's version contained in *The Last Days of the British Raj.* He makes it clear that the draft Declaration which Wavell wanted the Congress leaders to sign and which he reproduces in his book was taken from the "Government of India records," but is not so specific about the source of the other parts of the narrative. The question whether the wording of various conversations given by him is an imaginative reconstruction of what happened or "is a narrative by a participant in the story" cannot be answered at this stage. There is no doubt, however, that, on 27 August, blunt, heated talks, generally on the above lines, took place between the Congress leaders and Wavell, who had visited Calcutta two or three days earlier and was deeply affected by what he saw there and by the conviction that unless there was an early working agreement between the two major communities, the Calcutta happenings would be repeated all over India. He was also influenced by a statesmanlike suggestion made by Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din[34] if the Congress unequivocally accepted "Grouping," or the Viceroy or the British Government undertook not to permit the Congress to take a different view, the League would reconsider its position. This is narrated by Menon who also corroborates the essence of what Mosley says so dramatically with regard to the conversations

stituent Assembly, presumably Menon's version is to be preferred. Possibly, Mosley's informant got mixed up the two main points at issue, but this does not affect his main thesis about Viceroy's applying maximum pressure to make Congress leaders revise its tactics regarding "Grouping" and their nnpleasant reactions. Wavell was an able and fair-minded administrator. He started as a staunch believer in undivided India (in his first important speech as Viceroy he said, "You cannot alter geography—India is a natural unit"), but when he became better acquainted with the situation, his attitude became more balanced. At any rate, he was too high-minded to tolerate injustice or browbeating.

34. Menon only mentions Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din. Suhrawardy in the fifth instalment of his memoirs says that the Viceroy had long talks with him on the political situation. He, later, went to Bombay to acquaint the Quaid with the details of his talks with the Viceroy, and after this visited New Delhi to further explain the Muslim League point of view. Possibly some others also were active, but presumably Khwajah Nazim-d-Din's sober, matter-of-fact talk carried greatest weight.

on 27 August. According to Menon, the Viceroy pointed out to Congress leaders that "the crux of the matter lay in the Congress interpretation of grouping in the Constituent Assembly" and "made it clear that he would not undertake the responsibility of summoning the Constituent Assembly until this point was settled". Menon who reproduces the draft declaration which Wavell handed to the Congress leaders adds: "The discussions which went on for some time and now and then became rather heated, proved inconclusive."

Mosley observes that if a serious student were to pin down "the exact day on which the Congress party decided that they must get rid of Lord Wavell as Viceroy of India," the probable date would be 27 August 1946. Mosley might have as well given 27 August 1946 as the date on which the division of India became inevitable.[35] On this day the Viceroy described to Gandhi and Nehru what had happened at Calcutta, pointed out that "the only way to avoid similar trouble all over India was to set up coalition Governments in *Bengal* [italics ours] and at the Centre," and tried his hardest to persuade them to accept the only way which would make this possible. The reaction of the Congress leaders was negative and the road which they took could lead to only one destination—the division of India.

35. Those who were close to Gandhi placed this date some six weeks later. Gandhi's Secretary, Pyarelal writes: "On the day when the Muslim League was admitted into the Interim Government [14 October 1946], the battle of undivided India was irretrievably lost" (op. cit., I, 275). Pyarelal relies on some "clear instructions" supposed to have been issued from London for adoption of "Cabinet System" (presumably on the doubtful authority of anti-Nehru Sudhir Ghosh) and seems to think that even (*i*) after the Quaid had found means of waiving his objection to a nationalist Muslim without loss of face and (*ii*) in spite of the Viceroy seeing the justice of the League's basic stand (on Grouping) the League could be kept out of the Interim Government except on terms dictated by the Congress! As a corollary, he does not see that the fact that the Muslim League entered the Interim Government, not as a result of agreement with the Congress, but on the Viceroy's initiative, was an inevitable result of the stand taken by the Mahatma and the President of the Congress on 27 August 1946!

On this day Gandhi's statesmanship—and saintliness—was at its lowest ebb. He now stood forth as a plain partisan, indeed as a ruthless political boss who can see the quarry before him and wishes to press home his advantage. He and Nehru agreed to take away the formula suggested by the Viceroy, but there was no modification of their attitude. In fact, on their return (and after discussion with Sardar Patel?) they became far more truculent. That night Gandhi cabled a message to Attlee that the Viceroy was "unnerved owing to Bengal tragedy" and needed to be "assisted by an abler and legal mind". Next day he wrote a letter to the Viceroy which for its mastery of English language, flexibility of approach and brutal cynicism must take a high place in political literature. Attlee's response to Gandhi's suggestion for an "abler and legal mind" was not so negative,[36] but perhaps what influenced him even more were the letters Nehru wrote to his friends in London, which have not yet seen the light of the day.[37] It is, however, useful to quote a sentence from Attlee's autobiography. "Prior to the [Second World] war," he says, "I had a long talk with Cripps and Nehru on possible lines of dealing with the problem of Indian self-government and we had sketched out the idea of a constituent assembly to be summoned in order that Indians themselves might decide on their future." [38] Attlee, who had been a member of the Simon Commission, considered himself an expert on India. In 1933, as a member of the Labour Party, he criticised the White Paper of the British Government and favoured a solution of the Indian question on lines[39] demanded by the Congress. Now, he was the Prime Minister of Britain and in a position to implement the scheme which he and Cripps had worked out with Nehru regarding the Constituent Assembly. With this background Wavell had small chance of keeping the Constituent Assembly in abeyance—or postponing the swearing of the Congress-nominated government. He was overruled and was

36. *Vide* Pyarelal, op. cit., I, 28.
37. Cf. Mosley, op. cit., pp. 46–47.
38. *As It Happened*, pp. 210–11.
39. For detailed extracts from Major Attlee's statement in the House of Commons, see Kanji Dwarkadas, op. cit., pp. 435–37.

told to see that the Interim Government, as announced "should take office at once". Mosley says:[40] "The defeat for the Viceroy was considerable," and observes that "his [Wavell's] instinct was to resign at once," but that disciplined soldier created no crisis and dutifully carried out the orders. He, however, strove harder than ever to see that the imbalance at the centre was redressed and the dangerous tensions in the country controlled. Both the Labour Government and the Congress were publicly expressing their keenness to see the Muslim League enter the Central Government, but one has only to read the relevant pages of Menon's book to see how, in practice, the Congress tried its hardest to make this impossible. Wavell, however, persisted in his efforts and ultimately enabled the Muslim League to join the government without loss of face and without fettering itself by arrangements which would place it at the mercy of a party which was numerically in a majority, but which had got into a position of advantage, through what the Viceroy believed to be false pretences. This was a major grievance with the Congress. Nehru told Mountbatten on his arrival: "Wavell had made one serious blunder in inviting the Muslim League to come into the Constituent Assembly[41] [Interim Government], instead of waiting a little longer for them to ask to be brought in."[42] Congress resentment grew with Wavell's continued reluctance to bow to the Congress and ultimately they applied pressure on Cripps and Attlee and got rid of him. Another dignitary to suffer the same fate, later, for trying to play fair to Pakistan (in distribution of military assets) was Auchinleck.[43]

On 15 October the Interim Government was reconstituted with the inclusion of five Muslim League nominees. The manner in which the Congress acted after the acceptance by the League of the Viceroy's invitation further increased bitterness. The Viceroy suggested that one of the three senior portfolios—External

40. L. Mosley, op. cit., p. 49.

41. Obviously a slip for Interim Government. Muslim League never entered the Indian Constituent Assembly.

42. Campbell-Johnson, *Mission with Mountbatten*, p. 44.

43. Cf. John Connel, *Auchinleck*, specially pp. 915–18 and 920–22.

Affairs, Defence and Home Affairs—may be transferred to the League. Nehru did not wish to give up the External Affairs and threatened to resign on this issue.[44] Abul Kalam Azad in his memoirs, entitled *India Wins Freedom*, has revealed that Sardar Patel was "vehemently opposed" to the suggestion of giving Home portfolio to the League, and it was decided to offer Finance in the belief "that the League would not be able to manage Finance and would have to decline the offer".[45] This had results quite different from what Patel had anticipated. After saying that the Viceroy was informed that the Congress would offer Finance to a nominee of the Muslim League, Azad continues to say:

"When Lord Wavell conveyed this information to Mr. Jinnah, he said that he would give his reply the next day. It seems that at first Mr. Jinnah was a little uncertain about the offer. He had decided to nominate Liaqat Ali as the chief representative of the League in the Cabinet, but he was doubtful if Liaqat could adequately handle Finance. Chaudhary Mohammed Ali of the Finance Department heard this news and he immediately contacted Mr. Jinnah. He told him that the offer of the Congress was a real windfall and marked a great victory for the League. He had never expected that Congress would agree to hand over Finance to the Muslim League. With the control of the Department of Finance, the League would have a say in every Department of Government. He assured Mr. Jinnah that he need have no fears. He would give every help to Mr. Liaqat Ali and ensure that he discharged his duties effectively. Jinnah then accepted the proposal and accordingly Liaqat Ali became the Member for Finance. Congress soon realised that it had committed a great blunder in handing over Finance to the Muslim League. The Finance Member could interfere in every Department and dictate policy. When Liaqat Ali became the Finance Member, he obtained possession of the key of Government. Every proposal of every Department was subject to scrutiny by the Finance Department. In addition, he had the power of veto. Not a Chaprasi could be appointed in any Department without the sanction of his Department."[46]

44. Brecher, *Nehru : A Political Biography*, p. 324.

45. Abul Kalam Azad, op. cit., p. 167.

46. Choudhry Khaliquzzaman has stated at p. 270 of his *Pathway to Pakistan* : "The Finance portfolio had been offered to us but there was great hesitation in the beginning as to whether the Nawabzada would be able to deal with this very technical subject until having been assured by Chaudhri

The British Government made one more effort to save the Mission scheme and preserve the unity of India. In December 1946, the British Premier invited the Viceroy of India, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Liaqat Ali Khan, Jawahar Lal Nehru and Baldev Singh to London, and tried to straighten out the issue regarding the so-called acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan by the Congress.

As the Indian leaders could not come to an agreement, the British Government after consulting their legal experts issued a statement on 6 December which fully bore out the interpretation placed by the Muslim League on the terms of the Cabinet Mission Plan. It was presumably during their visit that Nehru was able to persuade the Labour High Command to replace Wavell by a more pliant Viceroy. As Muhammad Ali points out, Wavell was "a marked man" after his plain talk with Gandhi and Nehru on 27 August 1946. At that time he was only overruled by Attlee, but his success in bringing the League into the Central Government on reasonable terms further antagonised the Congress leadership. This antagonism grew when the Congress could not wholly have its way in the Interim Government. Announcement about his replacement by Mountbatten was not made till 20 February 1947—and the proposal was made to the King by Attlee on other premises[47]—but according to the extracts from the royal diary published by the royal biographer, Attlee had mentioned the matter to the King in "the mid-December"—i.e. not many days after Nehru's visit to London. The Working Committee of the Indian National Congress accepted the British Government's statement but again twisted its

Muhammad Ali of all help to him in the discharge of his duties as Finance Member, the Nawabzada accepted."

47. One is astounded at the inaccuracies contained in the sections relating to India and Pakistan in Attlee's memoirs as recorded by Francis Williams (*A Prime Minister Remembers*) and his autobiography *As It Happened*, but he was not wanting in ruthlessness and cunning. His choice of Mountbatten, who (to quote the royal biographer) was not only "King George's cousin but probably his closest personal friend" (John W. Wheeler-Bennet, *King George VI : His Life and Reign*, p. 710), was certainly a master-stroke for the achievement of the Congress-Labour objectives.

meaning in such a way as to nullify its effect. The Muslim League, accordingly, refused to enter the Constituent Assembly. An *impasse* was created, and ultimately it was realised even by the Labour Government that the Cabinet Mission Plan could not provide the answer. The British Premier, therefore, made a statement in the House of Commons on 20 February 1947, in which it was stated that the British would quit India by June 1948 and would decide at that time whether to hand over power to one Central Government or more, or to individual provinces in certain areas.

This was the end of the Cabinet Mission Plan and made it fairly obvious that the British Government would agree to hand over power to more than one successor Governments or to undivided provinces in certain parts. The Congress, however, true to the technique which it had consistently followed since its so-called acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan, refused to accept this interpretation and continued its opposition to the partition of the country and the creation of a separate Muslim state.

Another complication existed with regard to the provincial government in the key province of the Punjab. Sind and Bengal were now under League governments, but in the Punjab the government in power was a coalition of Congress, Akali Sikhs, and about half a dozen Muslim Unionists. Punjab was a province in which Muslims formed more than 57% of the provincial population but as the Sikhs who were 13% had been given 20% of the seats in the legislature, largely at the expense of the Muslims, it was possible for the so-called Coalition Government to have majority of one or two in the provincial Assembly. Of course the Government did not command the confidence of the majority of the population (as more than 90% of the Muslim members were Muslim Leaguers) and was able to function only on the strength of executive action and police force. Public meetings were banned all over the province and the population was given no opportunity to express itself. The Government was conscious of its weak position, and the ruling power was concentrated in the hands of the Governor and senior members of the services, who were almost all Englishmen. The extent to which the provincial ministers mattered in this so-called popular government may be judged by

the fact that at a time when the Chief Minister, who was also in charge of the portfolio of Law and Order, was away on a visit to Delhi, in his absence A.M. Macdonald, the Home Secretary—quite a junior member of the Indian Civil Service—and the Inspector General of Police issued orders banning the Muslim National Guards, who were volunteers of the Muslim League, like the volunteer corps attached to the Indian National Congress. This proved to be a singularly unwise step and released the forces which, within six weeks, ended the farce of the Coalition Government. Muslim leaders in the Punjab refused to carry out the orders for disbandment of Muslim National Guards, for which no explanation whatsoever had been given. The Chief Minister also on his return realised the justice of their stand and orders relating to the Muslim National Guards were hastily withdrawn. Public opinion had, however, been considerably excited by this time and insisted that there should be a complete restoration of civil liberties denied to the general public under the Khizr Government. A peaceful, non-violent civil disobedience movement started against the prohibitive orders and for thirty-four days the Muslim Punjab gave a demonstration of courage, discipline, self-sacrifice, and a capacity to peacefully put up with arbitrary use of brute force, for which it would be hard to find a parallel even in the several Satyagraha campaigns conducted under the trained leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Muslim women were in the vanguard of the struggle. It became quite a common sight in Lahore to see aged women in *burqas* and the Muslim ladies belonging to the noblest families, who had always been in purdah, joining silent, peaceful processions (one of which was led by Lady Hidayatullah, the Sind premier's wife) or attending women's meetings and thus contravening the prohibitive orders regarding public meetings and processions. The police and the bureaucracy acted with all the ruthlessness of which the Punjab bureaucracy of Khizr's days was capable. Most respectable women would be taken in police vans and left ten or fifteen miles outside Lahore to find their way back to the city. Those who refused to obey orders were attacked with tear-gas and, in one case, Lady Feroz Khan Noon (the European wife of a former Defence Minister of India) was tear-gassed in the police van, as a result of

which she sustained burns and fainted, and was left on the road in that condition. The Muslim public, however, true to their pledge maintained peace in the face of all this and, what is even more significant, were able to keep the movement completely free from any communal complications. During the course of the movement on one occasion, when a huge procession of about 50,000 was moving on the Temple Road, a brick came from the top of a Hindu house and hit a Muslim volunteer with fatal results, Here was an obvious opening for a communal riot, but the people in the procession displayed an exemplary discipline. The injured volunteer was immediately carried to the hospital and the procession quietly continued its course.

The Punjab authorities blacked out the news of what they were doing and, apart from issuing amusing press communiques, which daily reassured the public outside the province that the situation was perfectly normal and the League movement had ceased to receive any support, very little news was allowed to trickle out of the province. In the end, however, the Punjab Government realised that it could not carry on and came to terms with the Muslim League leader, under which the right of public meetings was generally conceded and most of the civil liberties restored. A few days after the successful termination of the civil disobedience movement, Sir Khizr Hayat, the Unionist Prime Minister, resigned (reportedly under Sir Muhammad Zafarullah Khan's advice[48]) and in the course of a public statement urged that in view of the declaration of the British Premier, made on 20 February 1947, with regard to the future constitutional arrangements for India, it was desirable that the Government in the Punjab should have the support of the Muslims in the Punjab, who after all constituted the majority, and promised to give his support to such a Government. The Governor called upon Khan Iftikhar Husain Khan of Mamdot, the leader of the Muslim League party, to assist him in the formation of Government. This invitation was accepted by the League leader, who in a public statement assured Hindus, Sikhs and Scheduled Castes of justice and protection at the hands of the

48. Cf. *The Tribune*, Lahore, 3 March 1947.

Ministry he proposed to form, and appealed for their goodwill and co-operation. This, however, did not suit Hindu and Sikh leaders and they declared that, far from giving any co-operation, they would never permit the Muslim League party to form a Government in the Punjab. Khizr Hayat resigned on 2 March. Two days later, Master Tara Singh, the Sikh leader, ceremoniously unsheathed his sword on the doorsteps of the Punjab Legislative Assembly and dcelared: "The time has come when the might of sword alone shall rule. The Sikhs are ready. We have to bring the Muslims to their senses."[49] The Hindu leaders including Lala Bhim Sen Sachar, the Congress Minister in the Khizr Cabinet, expressed similar sentiments. The violent speeches were soon followed by action and processions were taken out at Lahore, which first clashed with the police and later led to communal rioting. From Lahore the trouble spread to Amritsar, the citadel of Sikhism, and rioting and arson started on a scale hitherto unprecedented even in the tragic history of India. Actually this was not a sudden and spontaneous development. The Hindu and the Sikh plan was to prevent the Muslims, who constituted a clear majority of the population, from forming a Government at the cost even of the civil war. They had been collecting arms and ammunition. With these and other preparations they were certain that the Muslims would be worsted in a physical showdown. In this connection it is interesting to read a despatch by the special correspondent of *The Hindustan Times* (edited by the son of Mahatma Ganhhi) which was published three days after Khizr Hayat's resignation. The despatch sums up the pros and cons of a violent struggle in the Punjab and clearly shows how powerful Congress newspapers were publicly carrying on propaganda in favour of a civil war, which they thought would benefit the Hindus and the Sikhs. It says:

"Sikhs are much better organised and much better armed than the Muslims. For some time now they have seen a civil war coming and they have been preparing for it. High British officials of the Punjab Government told me that if they had to face a similar movement (like that of the Muslim League against the Khizr Govern-

49. *The Pakistan Times*, 15 March 1947, etc.

ment) from the Sikhs, they would have four times more trouble. If any such movement began, it would develop quickly into communal rioting. . . .

"Since the day the Sikhs saw a civil war coming, they have begun to think of the Sikh States in the Punjab as a counteracting factor against Muslim fanaticism. Attempts are being made to organise the Sikh States into a federation led by the premier Sikh State of Patiala.

"This has met with encouraging response. Those rulers who were not orthodox Sikhs have agreed to be converted to the orthodox Sikh faith and the ten-year-old son of the Maharaja of Kapurthala took the *Amrit* recently at a spectacular ceremony attended by leading Akali leaders.

"So when the rival claims of communities in the Punjab are submitted to the arbitrament of force, the Sikhs will also have the powerful support of the Rashtriya Sewak Sangh which has also been preparing for defence of Hindu rights."[50]

So the civil war in the Punjab, which was coolly considered and carefully planned by the Hindu and Sikh leaders commenced. The Congress leaders awaited its results with interest. For a long time they had hoped that Khizr would continue to oblige them and keep pulling out their chestnuts from the fire. Sir Khizr Hayat proved a broken reed. Now, they depended on the valiant Sikhs to stop Muslims from gaining ascendancy in the Punjab and paving the way for Pakistan. The civil war started and soon the centre of gravity shifted from Lahore to Amritsar, the citadel of Sikhism, but here the Hindu and Sikh leaders were in for a surprise. At this time Sir Even Jenkins, the Governor of the Punjab, had taken over the administration of the province in his own hands. Sir Even had shown a distinct tenderness for the wishes of the Hindus and the Sikhs by refusing to accept the offer of Iftikhar Husain Khan of Mamdot to form a Government (although he now had a clear majority in the legislature) but under the comparatively neutral rule of the British Governor the Sikhs did not have those advantages which they secured in East Punjab after 15 August 1947. The Hindus and the Sikhs were fully prepared but without the

50. *The Hindustan Times*, 5 March 1947.

advantage of police and military aid, which they secured subsequently, they could not make any headway against the Muslims. Even in Amritsar the Sikhs met with stubborn resistance from the Muslims and the myth of Sikh valour was shattered. In other places where Muslims were in a majority the Hindu and Sikh losses were, of course, heavier, and the Congress leaders realised that Sikhs would be as ineffective in staving off Pakistan as Sir Khizr Hayat Khan Tiwana. On 5 and 6 March, large-scale rioting and arson, which reduced half the city to shambles and which in fury and results can only be compared to a major battle, took place in Amritsar. The result was not what the special correspondent of *The Hindustan Times* had envisaged, and just three days later the Working Committee of the All-India National Congress, which was in session, passed a resolution demanding a division of the Punjab and by implication agreeing to a division of India. The Congress leaders saw that the Sikhs could not keep Muslims from coming into power in the Punjab and decided to save what they could!

Another precipitating factor was Liaqat Ali's budget, which shook the Congress leaders, particularly Patel. The budget was presented on 1 March 1947 and the resolution of the Working Committee was passed on 8 March.

The demand for a division of a province sounded strange from a political party which had all along resisted the division of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, but by implied agreement to the partitioning of India, it provided a basis for discussion and agreement with the Muslim League. Soon thereafter Viscount Mountbatten came as Viceroy and started consultations with the leaders of various political parties. Their proposals and viewpoints were being constantly discussed by Mountbatten with his advisers. As a result of these discussions a plan was evolved, which was taken by Lord Ismay and George Abell to London on 2 May. This Plan involved "demission of authority to the provinces, or to such confederations of provinces as might decide to group themselves in the intervening period before the transfer of power". The Plan sent up by Mountbatten was approved by the British Government with certain changes, but in the meanwhile Nehru, to whom the Viceroy

had shown the approved Plan at Simla, violently objected to its contents and stated the Congress could not possibly accept it.[51] A new Plan was, therefore, hastily prepared by Menon and personally taken by Mountbatten to London. It was opposed by Ismay and Abell and apparently the British Government was not happy about the eleventh-hour change, but Mountbatten threatened to resign, and the revised Plan was approved "without the alteration of a comma". Ultimately, as a result of the agreement, to which Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru on behalf of the Congress, Muhammad Ali Jinnah on behalf of the Muslim League and Sardar Baldev Singh on behalf of the Sikhs gave public expression through broadcasts on All-India Radio, the so-called Mountbatten Plan was announced on 3 June 1947. Under this Plan steps were to be taken to ascertain the wishes of the representatives of Sind, West Punjab, N.-W.F.P., East Bengal and the district of Sylhet in Assam, and as they all declared themselves in favour of a separate federation (Pakistan), the task of the division of the assets of the Government of undivided India and determination of exact boundaries of the two Dominions was taken in hand.

Shortly after this, His Majesty accepted the proposal to appoint Muhammad Ali Jinnah as the first Governor-General of Pakistan, for the establishment of which nobody had worked harder or more skilfully and wisely. On 14 August Mountbatten arrived in Karachi to inaugurate the Pakistan Constituent Assembly and formally proclaimed some other decisions. On 15 August 1947, Pakistan came into being as a separate self-governing Dominion.

The Quaid's assumption of Governor-Generalship has led to considerable criticism and many think that this step was wrong or even motivated by personal vanity. It is forgotten that the proposal

51. Nehru's main objection was to the demission of authority to the provinces and the states which would have led to Balkanisation of India. Possibly the Quaid-i Azam would have shared these fears *vis-a-vis* Pakistan, but Nehru also raised many objections to the proposed procedure regarding Baluchistan, N.-W.F.P., etc., which were incorporated to meet the Muslim League point of view. It is useful to study the account of Nehru's reactions contained in his note addressed to Mountbatten, in Menon, op. cit., pp. 363–64, to appreciate the difficult task of the Quaid-i Azam.

of having a common Governor-General for India and Pakistan was open to very serious objections, on grounds of principle, irrespective of the question of personalities. Suggestion regarding Mountbatten made it particularly dangerous.[52] There is no doubt that the League decision hurt Mountbatten. Apart from other things, he considered it a step-down for himself to give up the viceroyalty of the entire subcontinent and become a constitutional Governor-General of only a part. Mountbatten's likely reaction was before the League leadership, and it is known that their decision was not taken in haste. After a study of the available material on this subject, our considered opinion is that the League's decision was the right one. Considering the state of the Quaid's health there was no question of his becoming the Prime Minister, as suggested by Mountbatten. On the other hand, Mountbatten's Governor-Generalship of Pakistan may have helped the new state in a few minor matters but a study of the sizable literature which has appeared on the developments of the period gives no ground for believing that he, as the joint Governor-General, would have been effective enough to be of help—or even able to safeguard's Pakistan's interests—in any important matter against the standpoint of the Indian leaders,[53] parti-

52. Desmond Young in his autobiography, *Try Anything Twice*, has mixed up the dates, but his strong disapproval of the proposal, when called in to "square" Muslim opinion, gives the reactions of a well-informed public relations officer.

53. Ian Stephens, in *Pakistan* (pp. 175–76), has reproduced the two reasons underlying the League decision, as given to him by Chaudhri Muhammad Ali. The crucial reason was the question as to "what would happen in the almost inevitable event, with relations between Congress and League so bitter, of the proposed joint Governor-General being given conflicting advice by his two sets of Ministers, those in Karachi urging him one way, those in Delhi another". The question was not, as Stephens seems to suppose, one of "legal niceties" only. It reflected the League anxiety about safeguarding of Pakistan's interests by a common Governor-General in the inevitable event of their coming in clash with those of India. The fate of Field-Marshal Auchinleck, who stayed on to supervise the division of military assets, but was forced by the Government of India to quit, when he tried to hold the balance even, would show how real the fears of the League leaders were. The "fair" manner in which Mountbatten treated the Princes is another pointer to what actually happened.

cularly Patel. Long before the question of a joint Governor-General arose, a situation had developed under which Patel could secure any object on which he had set his heart. This was happening through various ways. Patel was, as Campbell-Johnson told Noel-Baker, "the effective Controller of the Congress Party" and had the invaluable support of the numerous, well-placed Hindu civil servants. He was also in charge of the Information Ministry, and the way *The Hindustan Times* was used on several occasions to successfully apply pressure on the Viceroy can be seen from Campbell-Johnson's book. Even more important was the fact that Viceroy's Constitutional Adviser—V.P. Menon—who had come to have such a hold over Mountbatten[54] was, as Moon puts it, "Sardar Patel's right-hand man." [55] There was a regular Patel-Menon axis. Mosley gives an almost pathetic example of what can only be called Mountbatten's naivette in dealing with Patel, and shows that when the Viceroy was in great glee at having "cracked the shell" of that "hard nut," he was only implementing what Patel and Menon had discussed and settled beforehand !! [56]

Mosley speaks of the "web" which "Sardar Patel was busily spinning" [57] to catch Mountbatten with the help of V.P. Menon, but it now appears that this web was really a large net and Patel had many helpers besides Menon. N.V. Gadgil who was a minister in the Interim Government has revealed in his autobiography, *Government from Inside*, how closely many senior Hindu members of the Indian Civil Service were working hand in glove with Sardar Patel. According to him, Sardar Patel had asked him to see Jeshvant Rao Godbole, I.C.S., "who was Viceroy's Secretary" and was distantly related to Gadgil, to find out how Viceroy's mind was working. He says:

"Sardar Vallabhbhai was an open-hearted, farsighted, thoughtful and shrewd political leader. It was vital to know how the

54. For an illustration of the close relationship between Mountbatten and Menon, see Campbell-Johnson, op. cit., pp. 144, 146, etc.

55. P. Moon, *Divide and Quit*, p. 174.

56. For details see L. Mosley, op. cit., pp. 101–02.

57. Ibid.

Viceroy's mind worked in view of the prospective Interim Government, and he asked me to see Mr. Godbole. Mr. Yeshwentrao Godbole, I.C.S., was the Viceroy's Secretary and knew of whatever political discussions the Viceroy had. Mr. Godbole assured me that he would do all that was possible subject to the limitations of his moral obligations, and he *did help considerably*." [58]

Godbole was contacted even before the formation of the Interim Government. After the Government had been formed and Sardar Patel became the Home Member, the liasion between him and the Hindu I.C.S. officers became far more extensive. Gadgil says that

"a few days after the assumption of office by the Interim Government, Sir Gurunath Bewoor, a senior I.C.S. member of the erstwhile Viceroy's Council, who had retired a few days earlier, saw me and said that some senior Hindu I.C.S. officers had asked him to arrange a private meeting between themselves and Nehru. They desired to give him some vital information. They said that the Muslim I.C.S. officers had been meeting the League leaders for long and supplying them the inside information. They wanted to disabuse Nehru of his prejudice against them. They, too, were Indians and welcomed the advent of freedom and would like to convince Nehru of it. They desired me to arrange an informal meeting over a cup of tea. I told Bewoor that I could do it only after consulting Vallabhbhai. I did so the same evening and was asked to see Nehru and place before him what the officers had in mind. Vallabhbhai was not content with giving advice only. He asked Vedilal, a member of the Legislature from Gujarat, to arrange such a party so that I should not be burdened with the expenses. I made an appointment with Nehru the next day at his residence and told him what the I.C.S. officers wanted. Nehru's reaction was characteristic. He flew into one of his tempers and said that nothing prevented them from seeing him in his office." [59]

Gadgil says that he reported this to Vallabhbhai and as the meeting between the Hindu officers and Nehru did not materialise owing to Nehru's failure to give an appointment at his residence, Gadgil met some of them at Sir Gurunath's residence. "Vallabhbhai also saw a few of them at his residence and won them over, allaying their fears with his usual statesmanship." Gadgil says,

58. N. V. Gadgil, *Government from Inside*, p. 12.
59. Ibid., pp. 16–17.

later: "Vallabhbhai was watchful regarding the state of affairs in the Government. He used to invite the Secretaries of the various departments to tea or dinner almost every week[60] by turns, listen to their problems and difficulties and advise and guide them. The civil servants were greatly encouraged by this and worked with greater self-confidence." [61] It may be presumed that the discussions at these meetings were not confined to the disposal of the departmental problems faced by the secretaries!

Menon's own book makes it clear that not only Mountbatten had built up a special relationship with the Indian leaders which was denied to the Quaid, but when Nehru opposed the plan

60. Incidentally, it may be pointed out that after Independence, it was not Prime Minister Nehru, but the Home Minister Patel, who remained in charge of the Services. This was, in a way, a continuation of the pre-Independence position, when under the British Viceroy, the Home Member was in charge of the Services. In Pakistan, Establishment Division (as well as Intelligence Bureau) was soon taken over by the Prime Minister from the Home Minister, but in India the old position continued with the result that except for matters which came up to the Cabinet—and there also Patel had his "group" members (e.g. Gadgil) to support his point of view—Patel rather than Nehru had the effective control of the administrative machinery. Little wonder that Ranadive, the communist leader, told Kanji Dwarkadas on 9 January 1948 that the "Nehru Government had gone very weak and that Vallabhbhai was in sole charge," and added: "Nehru is now only a mask for Vallabhbhai" (Kanji Dwarkadas, *Ten Years to Freedom*, p. 260). The actual position was even worse. As Dwarkadas brings out in connection with the puzzling behaviour of the Indian authorities after one attempt at Mahatma Gandhi's assassination had been made and details of conspiracy had become known, that "the R.S.S. had infiltrated inside the Central Government's and Bombay Government's police" (ibid., p. 270) and that "Delhi's Deputy Commissioner who was primarily responsible for Gandhi's safety was notorious for his pro-R.S.S. inclinations. It is also known that R.S.S. men had entered into the police ranks in Delhi in very large numbers" (ibid., p. 271). The Deputy Commissioner of Delhi and many police officers—particularly in the Intelligence Branch—were Sikhs from the Punjab, who were particularly bitter regarding the Partition and its aftermath. These people were Patel's "eyes and ears" and the "indomitable Sardar" was, in a way, the instrument of these embittered, hate-driven bureaucrats until Mahatma Gandhi's assassination gave him a shock from which he never really recovered.

61. Gadgil, op. cit., p. 17.

which Mountbatten and his team had evolved after working for weeks, which he had sent to London for approval and which had been actually approved, Mountbatten had no hesitation in brushing it aside to meet Nehru's point of view.

Many other instances can be cited to show that when the Indian leaders thought it fit to apply pressure, Mountbatten gave in. In July when Indian Independence Act had not yet been passed and the Government of India was still working under the Act of 1935, Nehru and Patel asked Mountbatten to throw out the League ministers. They had no legal basis for their demand, but Mountbatten met their point of view by so reorganising his government as to let Mustim League ministers deal only with the areas which would constitute Pakistan after 15 August 1947.

Even apart from the "web" which Patel had successfully woven round Mountbatten, the plain truth is that Mountbatten and the British Government were eager to retain India, the bigger of the two successor states, within the British Commonwealth, and they would not take any measure which could jeopardise this major national goal.

While the Indian leaders, with the invaluable help of Menon, were in a position to get what they wanted, Mountbatten's Governor-Generalship of Pakistan would have circumscribed the autonomy of the new state. Those who met Mountbatten after the Partition say that what he had in mind was not two completely independent states, but two sovereign states joined through a Union. Even after the Partition he would trot out these ideas to influential Pakistanis who met him. A senior officer of the Finance Ministry of Pakistan visited Delhi as a member of a Pakistani delegation and was one of those who were taken to talk to the Governor-General after the banquet given by him to the delegates. Mountbatten started talking about a Customs Union fot India and Pakistan, to which the officer replied : "Have any two countries formed a customs union, without having Joint Defence, and can there be Joint Defence between India and Pakistan with the present situation in Kashmir?"

Campbell-Johnson gives some idea of what Mountbatten had at the back of his mind. "He has come round to the view today

that the Cabinet Mission Plan can somehow be resurrected in a new form and name. As originally presented, it was psychologically wrong. If the principle of two sovereign States could be accepted, union might be achieved through sovereignty."[62] Even after Partition, Menon who was Mountbatten's political mentor wrote in *The Statesman* of 20 October 1947, suggesting that India and Pakistan should come together for three subjects of Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications. It is true that the Quaid-i Azam and later President Ayub offered Joint Defence to India, but such an offer from an independent state, which is fully organised and has built up its own institutions, is something quite different from a scheme put through by a joint Governor-General in a completely amorphous stage. Looking to the strength of different forces at Delhi there is no doubt that Pakistan's sovereignty would have been greatly diluted if it had started with Mountbatten as its Governor-General, and the League took the right decision. In fact, the proposal which the Quaid made (in May 1947) and for which he has received insufficient credit reveals his constructive statesmanship. He suggested that India and Pakistan should have their own Governor-Generals but there should be a common figure, a sort of Super Governor-General, for the brief transitional period. This was the only way in which the advantages of a common Governor-General could have been secured without imperilling or diluting Pakistan's sovereignty. The proposal was not accepted by Mountbatten, but, later, Lord Samuel, the Liberal leader and experienced administrator, made in essence the same suggestion—for "a Vicerory presiding over the two Governors-General".[63] The wisdom of this proposal was presumably recognised, but the meeting of the British Prime Minister and the party leaders, which considered it, felt "that such a suggestion was now too late to put

62. Campbell-Johnson, op. cit., p. 70. It is true that at this stage Mountbatten wanted "that the representatives of Pakistan and Hindustan should come together on the basis of parity," and said: "My object is to create the effect of the two sovereign states or separate blocks negotiating at the Centre rather than having a system of majority vote" (p. 71).

63. Ibid., p. 132.

into practice and in any case likely to be unacceptable to the Congress."[64] So the fault was not, after all, Quaid's!

It is true that Mountbatten felt hurt at the League decision. He seems to have been unaware of the extent to which he had forfeited the confidence of the Muslims. Even at the time of his appointment as Viceroy, Ismay "felt there was a danger of an issue being made of Mountbatten's selection as a pro-Hindu and anti-Muslim League appointment".[65] The subsequent developments confirmed this impression. By the middle of June 1947, according to Field-Marshal Montgomery's impressions formed during a visit to Delhi and recorded in his *Memoirs*, the Muslim League leaders felt that Mountbatten was in "Nehru's pocket". With this impression it is difficult to see how a different course could have been followed.

The writings of Menon and Campbell-Johnson[66] have created the impression that the Quaid withheld his reply to the proposal for a common Governor-General for a long time and then sprang a surprise by negativing it. This is not correct. The position is that the proposal for common Governor-Generalship and Mountbatten's appointment was *first mooted by Menon* (this in itself is significant). It was immediately accepted by Nehru[67] in writing (which again is significant and supports the view that it was intended to benefit India and embarrass the spokesmen for Pakistan). The tricky proposal and Nehru's prompt invitation to Mountbatten must have placed the League leaders on the horns

64. Ibid. 65. Ibid. p. 23.

66. Campbell-Johnson's version is riddled with contradictions. His own narrative shows that the Quaid made his own counter proposal for three Governors-General in May (p. 115). Still he talks of "Jinnah's last minute rejection of the joint governor-generalship" (p. 258) and to crown all, in the Epilogue of his book, makes the astounding statement: "Provision was made in the [Indian Independence] Act *on Mr. Jinnah's suggestion* [italics ours], for Lord Mountbatten to be Governor-General of both Dominions" (p. 355). The statement is manifestly incorrect. (To the same category belong the statements he attributes to the Quaid in favour of Mountbatten on the basis of hearsay in the footnote at page 230 of his book. The Quaid's assessment of Mountbatten was manifest in May 1947, when he politely and indirectly refused to have him as Governor-General of Pakistan.)

67. Menon, op. cit., p. 367.

of a dilemma, but the Quaid countered it—and this shows his shrewdness and resourcefulness—by his own suggestion. The date on which the counter proposal was made cannot be determined with certainty, but most probably it was suggested while offering comments on the new Plan based on Menon's Heads of Agreements—i.e. immediately when the proposal was made and at any rate before Mountbatten left for London on 18 May 1947. It is certain that it was discussed during Mountbatten's stay in London. Menon's statement with regard to the Quaid "that there was no comment on this proposal for common Governor-Generalship, etc.] and it was assumed that it had been accepted"[68] is, to say the least, ingenious. The Quaid made his proposal very early, but apparently it was misunderstood by the Viceroy. According to Campbell-Johnson, "Mountbatten's first assumption was that Jinnah also had in mind a common Governor-General, but only when he was in London[69] did it become apparent that Jinnah wanted three Governors-General, one of India, one of Pakistan and one, Mountbatten himself, in an overall position. . . ."[70] The Quaid had wanted Mountbatten to be "Supreme Arbitrator for the division of assets". The British Government did not accept this and Mountbatten was also shy of playing an arbitrational role, but apparently no attempt was made to iron out this part of the proposal and smoothen it, e.g. on lines suggested by Lord Samuel. Faced with a very awkward situation, the Quaid wisely withheld the communication of an unpleasant decision—about the *identity* of the proposed Governor-General for Pakistan—as long as it was possible (until 2 July), but he had made known his reservations about a common Governor-General and put forward his counter proposals from the beginning (i.e. in May 1947).

The Happenings in East Punjab. When Jinnah (now generally known and addressed as Quaid-i Azam) agreed to become the Governor-General of Pakistan, some Muslims—particularly those

68. Ibid., p. 393.

69. Mountbatten left New Delhi for London on 18 May and returned on 31 May.

70. Campbell-Johnson, op. cit., p. 115.

left in India—felt unhappy. They thought that it would have been better and more in Jinnah's style, if he had stayed on in India to keep a watch over the welfare of the Indian Muslims, whose position was likely to deteriorate with the departure of a neutral power. They, however, underrated the problems of the new state and failed to realise that the Quaid-i Azam was undertaking a very heavy burden and indeed making a great sacrifice in taking upon his shoulders the responsibility for seeing the new state fully on its feet. As Rushbrook-Williams points out, the Quaid was, indeed, "making a final sacrifice of all real prospect of recovering his health to the cause with which he had identified himself".[71]

Never was a state which had evoked so much enthusiasm inaugurated in less propitious circumstances. The massacre of Muslims in East Punjab had started even a few days before the inauguration of Pakistan, and before the state had begun to function, it had to build up a machinery to receive and look after such vast number of refugees as no other state has ever had to deal with. The anguish and the dismay which events of East Punjab caused not only amongst those who were victims of some of the worst barbarities of the world history but amongst the entire Muslim population of Pakistan can be easily imagined.

The inhuman atrocities of East Punjab are something on which writers in Pakistan hate to dwell. For them the subject is too full of agony, partly on account of their kinship with the sufferers and partly on account of incredibly low depths to which human nature degraded itself. The West Punjab Government did, in the beginning, publish some material, compiled, according to general belief, by Professor A.S. Bokhari, providing data from Government records regarding the Sikh Plan, etc., but the Quaid-i Azam discouraged such efforts. In spite of the anguish which he himself felt and the strong feeling on this subject in Pakistan, particularly among officers from the Punjab, he took a statesmanlike attitude, and refused to look at the question, except from a

71. Op. cit., p. 30.

broad, human point of view. At a sppech broadcast from Lahore in October 1947 he expressed his reluctance "to apportion blame as to which community has disgraced itself more".[72] Four months later, he took the same highminded, fair and statesmanlike view of the tragic development and said: "None of us, whether we be of Pakistan or of India, can speak of it without the deepest grief. Men, women and children have been massacred in their thousands—millions are homeless. The trouble once having started, the people on both sides have hit back at each other, and I would hope that they are ashamed of it."[73]

In India, however, considerable literature has appeared on the subject, from semi-official quarters. Even a person of the official eminence of V.P. Menon has thought it fit to deal with the subject at some length and to attempt to obscure the issues. It appears, therefore, necessary to deal with the subject, and set the record straight.

V.P. Menon, after stating that the communal hostilities had ebbed with the acceptance by the political parties of the 3 June Plan, goes on to say:

"But soon after the announcement of Radcliff Award on 17th August a determined campagin to drive out the Hindus aud Sikhs was evident all over West Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province. There were serious disturbances in Lahore, Sheikhupura, Sialkot and Gujranwala districts. A massacre of an unprecedented scale took place in Sheikupura in West Punjab. This was followed by a violent anti-Muslim reaction in Amritsar."[74]

Later, he says, "the holocaust in West Pakistan had its repercussions in East Punjab".[75]

72. Quaid-i Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, *Speeches as Governor-General of Pakistan, 1947–48*. p. 24.

73. Ibid., p. 49.

74. Menon, op. cit., p. 418.

75. Ibid., p. 419. K.L. Panjabi, the biographer of Patel, builds on the foundation laid by Menon, but add another story. After mixing up the sequence of events like Menon, and linking, like G.D. Khosla, the post-Partition trouble with events at "Calcutta, Noakhali, Bihar, Lahore, Amritsar and Rawalpindi" (relating really to March 1947, or much earlier), he says: "In this explosive atmosphere a fresh spark was lighted by the

Not only are these statements misleading[76] and made in complete disregard of the dates of disturbances at various places, but are calculated to obscure fairly simple reasons which led to the recrudescence of trouble in August 1947. The fact that the Sikhs started their brutal operations in East Punjab a good few days *before* "the announcement of the Radcliff Award on 17th August" is generally well known and accepted by all impartial observers. Leonard Mosley, for example, says on the basis of the report of General Rees, as contained in the official history of the 4th Indian Division: "The Sikhs, as they had threatened (and as Delhi had been warned), had opened their campaign of violence in the second week of August."[77] Elsewhere, he quotes a report which Mountbatten received on 27 July and which gave "information—from a reliable source" to the effect "that the Sikhs intend to act on or about 7th August".[78] That this time-table was adhered to may be seen from Mosley's account of the murder on 9 August of four senior Muslim Army Officers and

Radcliff Award, defining the boundary between India and Pakistan and allotting Gurdaspur to India. Pakistan screamed that this was vile injustice perpetrated by a conspiracy between Radcliff and Mountbatten. 'Let us have our revenge,' said the mob. Widespread trouble broke out in West Punjab, Hindus and Sikhs fled from the villages to the cities but could find no protection. They were looted, tortured and killed like helpless sheep under the knife of a butcher. The news of these atrocities flashed to East Punjab where the Hindus reacted with equal ferocity" (*vide* K.L. Panjabi, *The Indomitable Sardar*, p. 127).

76. This is not the only instance of tendentious and misleading statements made by Menon. John Connel refers to his "biased and inaccurate" reasoning in another connection (Connel, op. cit., p. 883). Penderel Moon gives an instance in which Menon disowned a statement which he had made in the presence of Moon and other witnesses, as it did not suit Government of India (see Moon, op. cit., p. 177, footnote). Campbell-Johnson's book contains a gist of Menon's advice to Mountbatten on several points (e.g. at p. 191) and his bias is easily visible. It is also worth noting that, although at the end of 1946 or the beginning of 1947, this Constitutional Adviser to the Viceroy worked out arrangements with Patel destructive of the Cabinet Mission Plan, which then held the field officially, neither he nor Patel informed Nehru of this step. (See Connel, op. cit., p. 883.)

77. Mosley, op. cit., p. 235. 78. Ibid., p. 211.

150 Muslim officials, etc., on the train to Pakistan.[79] Attacks in rural areas of Amritsar district had started a few days earlier—about 5 August—as Eustace, the British District Magistrate of Lahore, told Penderel Moon on 15 August. "The recent recrudescence of trouble in Lahore was due to events in Amritsar district where, for the last ten days, armed gangs of Sikhs had been setting fire to Muslim villages and butchering the inhabitants."[80]

If further proof is needed, it is possible to quote from a contemporary letter of Prime Minister Nehru addressed to Mahatma Gandhi in the course of which he makes the position crystal clear. He says:

"The present trouble started about three weeks ago in Amritsar rural areas. The Sikhs were the aggressors. Within a week Lahore retaliated, the Muslims being the aggressors. Since then it has spread on both sides, perhaps more so in Eastern Punjab where well-armed bands, chiefly Sikh, partly Hindu, had been roaming about and attacking predominantly Muslim villages."[81]

This letter, every word of which deserves to be underlined, is so clear and specific regarding the origin of the holocaust in the Punjab that no comment is necessary. It may, however, be added that the letter is dated 22 August 1947 and the trouble which is stated to have "started about three weeks ago in Amritsar rural areas" would, according to Prime Minister of India, have begun about 5 August 1947.

Leonard Mosley says that the Sikh killing was "both planned and at the same time blind and insensate". Apparently, he has not fully understood the reasons underlying the Sikh fury. It was not "blind and insensate" in its basic aim. There was a method in the madness and a purpose behind the atrocities. This has been made clear by a person exceptionally well qualified to appreciate and understand the tragic course of events. Penderel Moon, the author of *Divide and Quit*, was a senior British member of the Indian Civil Service, who had held high posts in

79. Ibid., pp. 216–17.
80. P. Moon, op. cit., p. 116.
81. Pyarelal, op. cit., II, 384.

the Punjab (including the Secretaryship of Governor) prior to Partition, and was given even higher appointments after Independence by the Government of India. No charge of pro-Pakistan or pro-Muslim bias can be laid against him. With regard to the Sikh point of view, he was particularly well informed, as he had been the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar, who, in the words of "a very senior British official," had to "regard himself as British ambassador to the Sikhs".[82] Moon mentions how he "had to try to establish friendly relations with Sikh political leaders and particularly with Master Tara Singh and other prominent Akalis";[83] and how, in this, he was assisted by his predecessor and by Major Short, who was so close to the Sikh leaders, including Baldev Singh. Moon's interest in the welfare of the Sikhs and his friendship for them is well known. In the section of his book dealing with the subject, he was not attempting to assess blame, but was only analysing whether the anticipation of the date originally fixed for Partition, i.e. June 1948, by an earlier date, viz. 15 August 1947, was responsible for the massacres, which, as Attlee publicly stated, were not expected by the British Government. While dealing with this question, he incidentally explains the position regarding the disturbances and factors underlying them. After referring to the Sikh desire for revenge (presumably for the happenings around Rawalpindi in March 1947) "for which they had been long preparing," he goes on to say:

"But apart from these feelings of revenge there was another factor which would have made it impossible to prevent a violent explosion in the Punjab by mere postponement of its division till June 1948. This factor was none other than the determination of the Akali leaders to ensure the survival of the Sikhs as a compact, coherent, undivided community. In the situation which had developed by 1947 this basic objective of Sikh policy could only be realized by the forcible expulsion of Muslims from East Punjab; for only so could accommodation be found on the Indian side of the frontier for the two million Sikhs who would otherwise be left in Pakistan. So in falling upon the Muslims in East Punjab *vi et armis* in August 1947 the Sikhs were not only

82. Moon, op. cit., p. 31. 83. Ibid.

gratifying their desire for revenge but also helping to secure a more rational objective—the integral survival of the Sikh community. The migratory movements that were thus set going became, no doubt, largely spontaneous and instinctive, the natural product of fear and danger, but there lay behind them, as the original source of the initial impulse, this rational motivation. To grasp this is to grasp an important clue to the understanding of these events. The determination of the Sikhs to preserve their cohesion was the root cause of the violent exchange of populations which took place; and it must have operated with like effect even if the division of the Punjab had been put off for another year."[84]

No further comment is needed to refute Menon's thesis, but a reference to Mountbatten's own summing up of the situation may be made to show that what happened in East Punjab was not by way of reprisal, as V.P. Menon alleges, for "a determined campaign to drive out the Hindus and Sikhs" from "West Punjab," but was something which the Sikhs had planned much earlier. Campbell-Johnson, giving an account of what the Viceroy told two editors of Delhi on 27 August 1947, says:

"Mountbatten then turned to a general account of what was happening in the Punjab. The Sikhs, he said, had launched an attack just as Giani Kartar Singh and Tara Singh before the 3rd June had told him that they would."[85]

A letter from Prime Minister Nehru addressed to Mahatma Gandhi on 25 August 1947 throws further light on the Sikh objectives. He says:

"The Akalis, or some of them, do not hesitate to talk in terms of establishing a Sikh State as a result of this turmoil. Their logic is not very good, but there is little doubt that many of them have vague hopes that something advantageous to them might happen if trouble continued. Some of these think that they can force India to go to war with Pakistan. In such a war they imagine that Pakistan is bound to be defeated and then Sikhistan will emerge."[86]

84. Ibid., pp. 279–80. For an authoritative exposition of Master Tara Singh's strategy, see the leading article in the (Akali newspaper) *Ajit*, Amritsar, 22 December 1947. The concluding lines confirm Penderel Moon's thesis.

85. Campbell-Johnson, op. cit., pp. 174–75.

86. Pyarelal, op. cit., II, 386.

In driving out the Muslims from Amritsar and neighbouring districts, the Sikhs had a plan and a discernible purpose, but they had not seen far enough. They had not fully foreseen what the repercussions of these happenings would be on the other side of the border. When the refugees with their terrible tales of woes streamed into West Punjab, there were inevitable reprisals, and communal rioting flared out in full fury. But the Sikhs were not wholly unprepared for this. In West Punjab, they had moved from distant villages into carefully chosen and well-guarded strongholds in three areas—Sheikhupura, Montgomery and Lyallpur. The Sikh plan was not only to carve out a compact area—a potential Khalsistan—in East Punjab, where "at least three-quarters of the Sikh population from West Punjab" could be brought, but also to hold on to their rich lands in colony districts of Montgomery and Lyallpur and in Sheikhupura in which Nankana Sahib is located.[87] On 25 June 1947, Tara Singh had told the Associated Press of India that "he was of the considered opinion that non-Muslims of the Western Punjab shall continue to stay on in their homes".[88] Considering the arrangements[89] which the Sikhs had made under the guidance of ex-soldiers and former I.N.A. officers[90] the idea was not so fanciful. This part of the plan was, probably, upset by happenings at Sheikhupura, where on 25 and 26 August (i.e. four-five days after the arrival there of Muslim refugees from East Punjab with "hysterical tales about their sufferings"[91] and promise of "early revenge" by local Muslims) there were heavy Hindu and Sikh

87. Possibly, this dual strategy was adopted to provide a basis for "a Sikh state to be carved out of two dominions".

88. G.D. Khosla, *Stern Reckoning*, p. 290.

89. As an example of elaborate arrangements made in Sikh villages in the Muslim areas, see the statement of Lambardar Sant Singh on pp. 158–59 of Khosla, op. cit.

90. In relation to happenings in East Punjab names of General Mohan Singh and Col. Niranjan Singh Gill were freely mentioned. The latter told Andrew Roth, a foreign correspondent, that a civil war to prevent the Muslim secession would have been preferable to acceptance of Partition. "The United States fought a civil war to prevent the secession of the South," he added.

91. Khosla, op. cit., p. 128.

casualties, and the Sikh leaders realised that they could not eat their cake and have it too—i.e. raise hell in East Punjab and live peacefully in the colony districts of West Punjab. A senior Sikh leader, therefore, visited West Punjab and told the Sikh colonists to pull out. Sikhs moved promptly from Montgomery to the adjacent Indian district of Ferozepur, but on 5 September, Sir Francis Mudie, the Governor of West Punjab, wrote: "There is little sign of three lakh Sikhs in Lyallpur moving, but in the end they too will have to go." Soon the decision to move them was also taken. The Muslim Deputy Commissioner of Lyallpur (Agha Abdul Hamid[92]) who had spared no effort to protect the minorities was surprised by this decision, made known after Giani Kartar Singh's visit on 7 September 1947. "*Hukum Hai*"—"These are the orders"—was all that he was told by the spokesman of those disillusioned but disciplined people, who "burnt their villages before leaving them and marched in thousands, in columns several miles long, carrying arms and engaging the Muslims on the way".

No useful purpose will be served by giving even an idea of the low, brutal and cowardly atrocities which were perpetrated in East Punjab—compared to which even the horrors of Belsan appear humane and civilised. Some indication of what happened has been given by foreign writers and correspondents. Ian Stephens has reproduced some accounts in his *Pakistan*,[93] including a despatch from Ian Morrison, the correspondent of *Times*. In spite of its somewhat sensational title, Dhanwantri's booklet, *Bleeding Punjab Warns*, will probably remain the most authentic, contemporary account from the pen of an Indian, of what happened in East Punjab,[94] while the letters of Abdul Ghani

92. For an elaborate tribute to Agha Abdul Hamid by a Sikh eye-witness, see Balwant Singh Anand's *Cruel Interlude*, pp. 66–67, etc.

93. Pp. 182–88.

94. We failed to get confirmation of a statement he makes about an alleged post-Partition incident at Sialkot, and trustworthy observers have contested much of what G.D. Khosla has accepted, on the basis of the refugees' statements. Such statements were also recorded by an organisation set up by West Punjab Government with regard to happenings in East Punjab but have not been published. It is said that Prime Minister Nehru

Dar, M.L.A., a Muslim Congressman of Ludhiana (India), addressed to Mahatma Gandhi and other political leaders at Delhi are other historic documents of a similar nature. They have been reproduced at pages 304–10 of the Urdu biography of Maulana Habib-ur-Rahman of Ludhiana written by his son and published at Delhi in 1961.[95] The East Punjab Assembly debates on "The East Punjab Armed Bands (Arrest and Detention) Act,

was opposed to the publication of the material used by G.D. Khosla.

The Sikh version of the events, compiled by Principal Gurbachan Singh Talib is entitled *Muslim League Attack on Sikhs and Hindus in the Punjab, 1947.* The basic pattern is that of Khosla's book, op. cit., with some additional statements and arguments. No attempt has been make to deal with the accounts of the foreign correspondents and neutral observers. Perhaps, a more fruitful approach might have been to show that the entire community was not infected by the criminal madness of the period. Indeed, this side of the picture has been totally ignored by the agencies set up in India and Pakistan "to collect data". (The only exception we have come across is an Urdu book *Angaron Men Phool* by Bhagat Ishar Das Seth, now of Chandigarh [Punjab, India] who has described the happenings in Dera Ghazi Khan very objectively and has done full justice to the efforts made by the British Deputy Commissioner, the Muslim Superintendent of Police and other police officials and Muslim gentry to protect every Hindu in the town of Dera Ghazi Khan and to effectively deal with all attempts at lawlessness in distant places.) And yet even now some glimmers of light are visible in the murky darkness. To take the case of the Sikhs, in the biography of Maulana Habib-ur-Rahman Ladhianvi one comes across two names which deserve to be mentioned with respect. One was Prabha, daughter of Dr Mitter Singh, Medical Officer, Ludiana, who visited Maulana's family in their hour of peril, offered every help and undertook the safe custody of the "sacks" of Maulana's correspondence files, which contained much material of historical importance (pp. 310–11). The other was Babu Bachan Singh, Advocate, who worked so energetically to curb the mob violence and protect the Muslims that his own life was in danger and on the request of his Muslim friends he had to be evacuated from Ludhiana to Delhi (p. 303). No less honourable was that unnamed Sikh of Amritsar who warned his leftist friend Sufi Ghulam Muhammad Turk about the impending attack on the huge Muslim refugee camp in Sharifpura (Amritsar), and made it possible to take precautionary measures and frustrate the attempt (*vide* Ghulam Qadir Farrukh, *Khun ki Holi*, pp. 65 and 67).

95. Entitled *Rais-ul-Ahrar Maulana Habib-ur-Rahman Ludhianvi aur Jang-i Azadi* by Aziz-ur-Rahman Ludhianvi.

3 November, 1947" also throw considerable light on what happened in East Punjab. Mrs Satiya M. Rai has given some extracts from the official report of these proceedings in her *Partition of the Punjab*[96] (pp. 94–95). She quotes Mr Prabodh Chand, member of the East Punjab Assembly, as saying: "I do not know how far killing of Muslims by the Hindus and Sikhs was considered a step in the right direction; but the fact remains that every officer right up to the Minister wanted that this should happen."[97] She also quotes from the speech of another member, S. Sujjan Singh, who toured seven thanas and "found that everyone right from a constable up to Deputy Superintendent of Police had some share in the looted property".[98] She has given comparative figures for abducted women and children recovered in East Punjab and West Pakistan respectively[99] and, in spite of the explanation of the East Punjab Government given by her, the figures show that, although this disgraceful crime was committed on both sides of the border, apparently the incidence of crime was much larger in East Punjab (India) than in West Punjab (Pakistan).

Penderel Moon has tried to pin the responsibility for happenings in the Punjab on Gandhi and the Quaid. Of course, if these incidents are considered as a by-product of the independence of India and attainment of Pakistan, these two revered leaders can be held responsible for all that was connected with it. This would, however, be grossly unfair and unrealistic. The responsibility for these happenings is on those who were in charge of the administration and failed to do their duty. Mountbatten's responsibility has been indirectly admitted by Mosley, who refers to a number of occasions on which Mountbatten could have acted more courageously and conscientiously, but did not.[100] Too little notice, however, seems to have been taken of the acts of omission and commission of the Governor and the British bureaucracy in the Punjab. Mountbatten, in particular, seems to have rated the Governor very high, and the fact that Sir Evan

96. Pp. 94–95. 97. P. 94. 98. P. 87. 99. P. 86.
100. Mosley, op. cit., pp. 189, 245–46.

Jenkins was warning Delhi about the Sikh plan and the likely happenings—primarily, it appears, to get special terms for the Sikhs—has created an impression that the massacres took place because his warnings were ignored. Very few people have bothered to examine what action he himself took, or failed to take, to do his elementary duty. The capacity of the Punjab administration of those days to "keep people in their proper place" was well known, and presumably it was this which impressed Mountbatten. He, however, was not aware of its traditional lack of vision and its inability to go beyond the beaten track, which made it a poor instrument for dealing with an abnormal situation. If the role of Sir Evan Jenkins is compared with that of Sir Frederick Burrows, the Governor of Bengal, the position becomes clearer. Burrows was new to the Indian conditions but he was a gentleman. "Sir Frederick was determined that his last days in India (for he would be going home after 15 August) should not be disfigured by the murder and mayhem of the year before, and he was prepared to use every weapon at hand, moral as well as military, to prevent it."[101] The situation in Calcutta was as explosive as in the Punjab—indeed, for a long time Mountbatten and his staff "believed that the main troubles, if any, would come in Bengal"[102] but Burrows called Gandhi to his help, who with the assistance of Suhrawardy brought the situation completely under control. The contrast between the Punjab and Bengal was too obvious to escape Mountbatten's attention, and he wrote to Gandhi:

"In the Punjab we have 50,000 soliders and largescale rioting on our hands. In Bengal our forces consist of one man, and there is no rioting. As a serving officer as well as an administrator, may I be allowed to pay my tribute to the One-Man Boundary Force, not forgetting his Second-in-Command, Mr. Suhrawardy?"[103]

Mosley has regretted that "Gandhi went on to Calcutta but it was in the Punjab that he was really needed". It has, however, escaped him that while, according to him, Burrows "pleaded with Gandhi to stay on in Calcutta for a time and throw a pot

101. Ibid., pp. 219–20. 102. Ibid., p. 203. 103. Ibid., p. 225.

of water on the fire," the all-knowing, all-powerful Governor of the Punjab felt no need for such help!

Mosley has, slightly, overstressed the part played by Burrows. The Governor had a meeting with Gandhi and tried to persuade him to stay on in Calcutta, but the man whose determined zeal was really responsible for persuading Gandhi not to leave Calcutta was the one whom Hassan Ispahani has designated "an unknown schoolmaster in Zakria Street, called Mohammed Osman" and whose sponsoring for mayoralty of Calcutta by Suhrawardy in disregard of Ispahani's legitimate claim "distressed" Ispahani so much. According to Pyarelal, after arrival at Calcutta on his way to Noakhali, "Gandhiji met by invitation Sir Frederick Burrows, the Governor". Pyarelal does not state what happened at the interview, but a subsequent telegram of Gandhi makes clear that the Governor suggested postponement of Gandhi's departure from Calcutta but he did not agree. How Gandhi changed his decision becomes clear from Pyarelal's narrative. He goes on to say:

> "Mohammed Osman the Muslim League Leader and an ex-Mayor of Calcutta with another Muslim friend came to Gandhiji in the evening. They complained that since the Muslims in the services had almost all been transferred to East Bengal, the Hindus of West Bengal had begun to think that they could do now whatever they like 'to be even with the Muslims'."

Gandhiji alone could save the Muslims of Calcutta. Could he not stay in Calcutta for a while "to throw a pot of water, as the saying went, on the fire that was raging in the city?"[104]

This was on 9 August. "The next day, 10 August, Mohammed Osman again came. A large Muslim deputation accompanied him. They entreated Gandhiji to stay on in Calcutta even if it were only for two more days." (Muhammad Usman and his friends must have known that Suhrawardy was reaching Calcutta on 11 August and after his arrival the matter could be left to him.) When Muhammad Usman and the Muslim deputation pressed Gandhi, he relented but imposed quite stringent conditions. He said: "I am willing, but then you will have to guarantee the

104. Pyarelal, op. cit., II, 362.

peace of Noakhali. If I do not go to Noakhali before the 15th on the strength of your guarantee, and things go wrong there, my life will become forfeit. You will have to face a fast unto death on my part." According to Pyarelal, "Mohammed Osman and his Muslim friends were taken aback by this. They hesitated but ultimately gave the required guarantee on their and Muslim League's behalf. They promised to despatch wires to the local League leaders at Noakhali and to send emissaries to help to maintain the peace in Noakhali." Gandhi "in deference to their wishes" postponed his departure from 11 to 13 August and wrote to the Governor next day: "What you could not do, a big Muslim deputation was able to do, and so I am here at least till tomorrow."[105]

The same day Suhrawardy arrived, having rushed to Calcutta from Karachi without staying in Delhi, where he was to spend a few days, and took charge of the Muslim affairs at Calcutta. The rest is well-known history, but perhaps many Muslims in Calcutta might have felt that through what he did on 9 and 10 August, the "unknown schoolmaster in Zakria Street called Mohammed Osman" had earned his mayoralty.

It is, however, not only his failure to exhibit that touch of genius which a God-fearing Englishman displayed in Calcutta, but his failure in his elementary duty of preservation of law and order, for which the Governor of the Punjab must bear responsibility. He resisted the proposal to take action against Tara Singh in August, when information about the Sikh plan was available—and he himself had been passing it on to Delhi. At that stage it may have been too late, but there can be no condonation of his earlier inaction, e.g. when infuriated by the Governor's invitation to Khan of Mamdot to form a ministry, Tara Singh ceremoniously unsheathed the sword and hysterically preached violence. What happened on this occasion is worth recording fully. According to Penderel Moon, "the mere rumour of a League Ministry was sufficient to evoke demonstrations by the minority communities. The ban on processions was still in

105. Ibid., p. 363.

force, but in spite of this on March 4 Bhim Sen Sachar, the Finance Minister in the outgoing Khizr Government, feeling perhaps that non-Muslims should have as much liberty to defy law as the Muslims had enjoyed in the past weeks, led a procession to the Assembly Chamber in Lahore where he proclaimed to a vast assembled multitude: 'I, as a member of the Government, hereby declare that you have every right to take out processions.' The Sikh leader, Master Tara Singh, raised the slogan, *Pakistan Murdabad*, and brandishing a sword shouted, *Raj karega khalsa, baqi rahe na koi*."[106] Already on 28 February Tara Singh had given a press interview to a representative of *New York Times*, in the course of which he said:

"I do not see how we can avoid civil war. There can be no settlement if the Muslims want to rule the Punjab. We cannot trust the Muslims under any circumstances. The Sikhs had the ability to keep the Muslims out of Eastern Punjab but why should we stop there. We shall drive them out of the Punjab entirely. The Sikhs have started to reorganize their own private volunteer army in response to the Muslim League month-old

106. Penderel Moon, op. cit., p. 77. It seems to have escaped general notice that Sikhs had been making preparations for succeeding the British in the Punjab from a much earlier date—in fact, from 1940 ! A post-Partition Urdu publication, *Sikh-Muslim Tarikh* by Abul Aman Amritsari, issued by the Idarah Saqafat-i Islamiyyah (Institute of Islamic Culture), Club Road, Lahore, 1958, reproduces (pp. 167–68) a statement of Master Tara Singh which appeared in the Punjabi journal, *Panj Dariya*, in December 1945. He said: "When in 1940, France was defeated by Germany, there was nervousness here; people thought that the British would be defeated. I also had this possibility before me. . . . With this idea we used to discuss things amongst us. We organised Jathas, and made arrangements by which Sikhs could gather quickly at some places. In our plans Lahore occupied a special place. We felt that there would not be much difficulty in taking possession of the city of Amritsar, and made arrangements so that Jathas of Sikhs could simultaneously attack Lahore from all four directions." He added that absconding and armed murderers were being given shelter in the Sikh Gurdawaras so that "in case there was disorder in the country, these desperadoes may prove useful," and said: "The second charge against Akalis was of giving shelter to Sardar Harbans Singh, and it was the same, viz. to save Punjab from falling under Muslim domination" (translated from Urdu).

agitation against the Coalition Ministry of the Punjab in which the Sikhs are represented."[107]

In his speech on 3 March in the grounds of Kapurthala House, Lahore, he was even more categorical:

"O Hindus and Sikhs! Be ready for self-destruction like the Japanese and the Nazis. Our motherland is calling for blood and we shall satiate the thirst of our mother with blood. By crushing Moghulistan we shall trample Pakistan. I have been feeling for many a day now that mischief has been brewing in the province and for that reason I started reorganizing the Akali Party. If we can snatch the Government from the Britishers, no one can stop us from snatching the Government from the Muslims. We have in our hold the legs and the limbs of the Muslim League and we shall break them. Disperse from here on the solemn affirmation that we shall not allow the League to exist. The world has always been ruled by minorities. The Muslims snatched the kingdom from the Hindus, and the Sikhs grabbed it from the hands of the Muslims, and the Sikhs ruled over the Muslims with their might and the Sikhs shall even now rule over them. We shall rule over them and will get the Government, fighting. I have sounded the bugle. Finish the Muslim League."[108]

The above extracts may appear too long, but as on 3 and 4 March a fire was started which developed into a huge conflagration and led to some of the greatest tragedies of human history, extensive quotations have been thought justified, to indicate its origin. They also refute the thesis built up by Khosla himself that the happenings in the Punjab were a continuation of what took place in Calcutta, Noakhali and Bihar. The developments in the Punjab had no connection with them. They started as the Akali—and the Congress—leaders were not willing to permit the functioning of normal constitutional government, and give the leader of the Muslim League party chance to form a government. We have quoted (in a lengthy footnote) Master Tara Singh's statement of 1945, outlining the steps taken by the Akali leaders in 1940, i.e. after the defeat of France, to ensure that the Sikhs captured Amritsar, Lahore, etc., in the event of the

107. Khosla, op. cit., p. 100. 108. Ibid.

British defeat. We have also reproduced his remarks of 28 February and 3 March 1947, which leave no doubt that he wanted the future of the province to be put to what *The Hindustan Times* called "the arbitrament of force". So far as Congress leadership was concerned, a quotation from Mahatma Gandhi's Private Secretary, Payarelal, will make the position in 1947 clear:

"One of them [Congress leaders in the Punjab], a top ranker, was reported to have delivered himself at a public meeting as follows in the first week of March 1947: 'I have had consultations with the Congress High Command and I can with full responsibility say that *non-violence or violence, clashes or no clashes* we must see that the League Ministry is not established here' (from a note to Gandhiji by a member of the A.I.C.C. from the Punjab)." [109]

It is clear that, unlike the riots of Calcutta, Noakhali and Bihar, the developments in the Punjab started plainly, as a "communal war of succession".

What was the role of Governor Jenkins at this juncture? He allowed Tara Singh to have his way as far as it was within his power, and "abandoned the negotiations with the Muslim League leader".[110] Jenkins took over the administration of the province under Section 93 of the Government of India Act, but did not raise a little finger against the law-breakers and open advocates of bloodshed. It was this failure to nip the trouble in the bud which unleashed the forces of communal frenzy, and ultimately they became uncontrollable.

In a way the trouble lay deeper, and the British Governor's responsibility for creating in the Punjab an unreal and unhealthy situation, which could result only in an explosion, dates from an earlier period. The Sikhs and the Hindus became so furious at the "mere rumour" of the Muslim League forming a ministry in the Punjab, because they had been used to a set of circumstances under which, through various subterfuges and with the blessings of the British Governor, a Government which did not command the confidence of the Muslims had continued to hold

109. Payrelal, op. cit., p. 832. Italics ours.
110. Khosla, op. cit., p. 101.

office. The seeds of ultimate trouble were sown in 1946, when, in spite of a resounding victory at the polls, the Muslim League was kept out of the cabinet. According to Penderel Moon :

"Khizar and the Unionist Party suffered a crushing defeat and the Muslim League emerged as the strongest single party with seventy-nine seats in a house of 175. But not having an absolute majority the League alone could not form a Ministry, and the extreme, uncompromising attitude which they had adopted during the elections precluded them for the time being from obtaining support from elsewhere. In the circumstances it was expected that the Governor would temporarily take over the administration under Section 93 of the Government of India Act until a stable Ministry could be formed. With time, patience and discreet promises of loaves and fishes the League would probably have succeeded in winning over a sufficient number of members to secure a majority. But a cardinal error was now made. Baldev Singh induced Khizar to head a Coalition Ministry supported by Congress Hindus, Akali Sikhs and his own nine Muslim followers. Khizar, by all accounts *reluctantly and after much persuasion*, agreed and the Governor, Sir Bertrand Glancy, passively accepted the arrangement."[111]

According to the Muslim League version, which will be given later, the Governor was not such a passive party but was the key figure in maintaining an administration under which the real power remained with the British bureaucracy. Moon does not subscribe to this view, but even he has to admit that "a cardinal error" had been committed and that "in view of Khizar's own hesitations a few words of discouragement from the Governor, who was known to be his well-wisher, must have turned the scale against it. But the words were not spoken. The Governor took the easy, strictly constitutional line of least resistance and left his successor, who took office a few weeks later, and the province at large to reap the consequences".[112]

At the Muslim Legislators' Convention held at Delhi in April 1946, the Nawab of Mamdot, the leader of the Muslim League party, gave an account of the Governor's part in what Hugh

111. Penderel Moon, op. cit., p. 71. Italics ours.

112. Ibid., p. 73.

Tinker calls the "squalid conspiracy,"[113] to keep the Muslim League out of the cabinet. His speech was in Urdu and the following is a translation of the relevant passage from an Urdu account of the Convention, entitled *Tarikhi Faislah* edited by Abdul Wahid Qureshi and published at Delhi in July 1946 with an introduction by Nawabzadah Liaqat Ali Khan. Tracing the course of events after the election of 1945–46, the Nawab of Mamdot said:

"The first meeting of the Muslim League party was held on 24 Feburuary 1946, when office-bearers were elected. As this was the largest party [in the Assembly] it was incumbent on the Governor to call me as the leader of the party and invite me to form a government. He, however, did not do so . . . and waited till 1 March so that the Congress-Akali-Unionist Coalition may be formed and Malik Khizr Hayat Khan may be made the Chief Minister as the leader of the Coalition Party. On 1 March the Governor of the Punjab called me and on his inquiry I informed him that if I were asked to form a ministry, I could do so. In spite of this he extended me no such invitation and waited for another week so that the Congress, Akali and Unionist parties may discuss the details and complete their arrangements. When he was assured that these details had been settled, he called me and inquired about the party position. I told him that in addition to the 78 members of the Muslim League party, 12 other members of the Assembly had promised to support the Muslim League Ministry, and thus I had the support of 90 members. He, however, refused to accept this and stated that I had only the support of 78 members. The Governor also read out a letter written by two Hindu Jat members to the effect that owing to a misunderstanding they had agreed to support the Muslim League and were now withdrawing the offer of co-operation. I replied that even if these two members were ignored, I had 88 members of Assembly with me and commanded a majority, but Governor Glancy kept on insisting that Muslim League party could depend only on its members and not on any other. Accordingly, I was sent away. This shows the extent to which the Governor of the Punjab was a party to a conspiracy against the Muslim League. It is not the function of any Governor to send for members and obtain from them statements of the type referred to."[114]

113. Hugh Tinker, *Experiment with Freedom*, p. 97.

114. Abdul Wahid Qureshi, *Tarikhi Faislah*, pp. 246–48. Translated.

These developments took place in the spring of 1946, i.e. a few weeks before Jenkins appeared on the scene. He had almost a year to set things right but failed to take any constructive, statesmanlike step. There were two reasons for this, which also contributed to the events in the Punjab. One was Jenkins's pro-Sikh attitude, and his complete lack of contact with anybody who could really speak for the majority community in his charge. This is quite obvious from such portions of his despatches to Delhi as have seen the light of the day. He enjoyed the confidence of the Sikhs, but he never helped them to see the inevitable realities. He and even Moon have accused the Quaid of not making sufficiently strenuous efforts to win over the Sikhs. This is contradicted by the account given by the Maharaja of Patiala, wherein the Quaid's efforts have been described,[115] but in a moment of revelation Moon himself has admitted that "if there was any possibility of agreement between the Akalis and the Muslim League, it was effectively destroyed when the League was excluded from power in the spring of 1946".[116] If there was any chance even after that date, it was destroyed on account of the impossible demands which Jenkins and other British officers encouraged the Sikhs to make. Even after the Plan of the Third June had been announced, this impartial administrator was asking the Muslims to hand over Montgomery district, where Muslims were in such overwhelming majority (nearly 70%) and which lay so far to the west of Lahore, to the Sikhs. He wrote to the Viceroy:

"I believe there is quite a lot in the claims of Sikhs and for that matter, of the other residents of the East Punjab for a share in the canal colonies of the West and the Ginanni's [*sic*][117] idea that Montgomery district should be allotted to the East is by no means as ridiculous as it sounds."[118]

115. Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, *Final Phase of the Struggle for Pakistan*, pp. 94–95.

116. Penderel Moon, op. cit., p. 212.

117. This friend of the Sikhs, after thirty years' service in the Punjab, could not correctly spell "Giani" or for the matter of that "Kartar Singh," which he consistently spelt "Khartar Singh" (*vide* Mosley, op. cit., p. 205).

118. Quoted by Mosley, op. cit., p. 212.

Knowing fully that no Boundary Commission could possibly allot Montgomery district to the Sikhs he beseeched Mountbatten to try to persuade the Muslims to allow this as a "gesture"!

Jenkins made this proposal at the end of of July, i.e. long after the scheme of Partition and the lines on which the boundaries were to be drawn had been approved, but it is quite likely that during the previous year the British bureaucrats in the Punjab could not make any constructive contribution to the problem of the province as they had their own plans for the future. They had completely cold-shouldered the League, and were really interested in maintaining a united Punjab, not for any reasons of altruism, but in order to keep it within the British Commonwealth. In George Abell they had an influential representative in Mountbatten's entourage. He was the Viceroy's Pricipal Private Secretary and the only officer in Mountbatten's secretariat with experience of Indian administration. It may be presumed that he palyed an important role in the evolution of the original plan which he and Ismay took to London and which was approved by the British Government. V.P. Menon is his *Transfer of Power in India* has dramatically revealed how Mountbatten showed it to Nehru who rejected it out of hand and how it was replaced by another scheme of Menon's drafting. Under the original scheme "the demission of authority" was to be to the provinces and, although they could group themselves into "confederations," there was no automatic arrangement for having successor Central Governments. The British bureaucracy which wanted the Punjab to be admitted to the British Commonwealth did not wish to release its hold over the province, and no normalisation of the constitutional position took place, although, as pointed out by Brecher, under Khizr Hayat Khan "the constitutional government was virtually at a standstill because the coalition was uneasy and had a majority of only three. The legislature met only when it was essential to pass the budget". Actually in 1947 Khizr resigned on the eve of the Budget Session!

Ultimately the Sikhs were the worst sufferers from Sir Evan Jenkins's policy, but, as things turned out, the plan of the British bureaucrats to keep a united Punjab safe for the British Common-

wealth did not work. Even in the service of the Empire they were showing their traditional, limited vision. Mountbatten and the Government in Britain were fighting for bigger stakes. They wanted the whole of the subcontinent to remain in the Commonwealth, and once this was assured they scrapped the scheme which Abell had taken to London for provincial successor states. In the meanwhile, incalculabe damage had been done to the cause of provincial harmony, and Jenkins was not the man to be able to stop the forces which had been let loose,

Dealing with the happenings in the Punjab, Lord Ismay remarked that "the giants of old like the Lawrences and John Nicholsons, would probably have clapped the Sikh leaders into jail at once".[119] This would indicate what a top administrator[120] felt about the stature of the men at the helm of affairs in the Punjab. It has already been stated that things had been allowed to drift too long, but action against those actively indulging in illegal and criminal activities even at this stage would have been useful. It would have interfered with their elaborate plans, and, at any rate, made clear the Government stand with regard to those indulging in and preparing for violence. It certainly would have restrained the members of the police force and state armies in East Punjab who played such an important and ugly role. In any case, Jenkins's reasons for taking no action against Tara Singh are most extraordinary. Mosley quotes him as observing: "What would have been the good of arresting the old rascal at the beginning of August, if in mid-August, when Independence came, he was set free ?"[121] This argument is, to say the least, irrelevant. What

119. Quoted by Ian Stephens, op. cit., p. 173.

120. Mosley, op. cit., p. 215.

121. Ismay was not the only prominent Englishman to find fault with the handling of affairs in the Punjab. Lt.-General Tuker, G.O.C. Eastern Command, presumably bearing in mind the beneficial results of firm measures adopted in Calcutta in 1946 wrote: "Military Government of even a limited area would have saved the Punjab in 1947" (op. cit., p. 130). A more detailed criticism appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* dated 31 August 1947. It has been reproduced at length by Tuker in his above-named book, pp. 450–51.

happened in mid-August was hardly the concern of Sir Evan. He and Mountbatten had a clear responsibility during the earlier period. Was that responsibility discharged ?

Apart from the irrelevance of Sir Evan's argument, the real tragedy was that—like most British bureaucrats in the Punjab—he took a dim view of the capacity and sense of responsibility of the two governments which were taking over. Mosley has rightly doubted the accuracy of his anticiption of what the native government would have done when Independence came. Writing about the plea that Tara Singh would have been set free in mid-August, Mosley remarks: "But would he in fact been set free? Nehru was as anxious as the Viceroy to see the transfer of power come about peacefully. He would (as he subsequently showed) have been more than willing to offend the Sikhs if, by sequestering their leaders, he averted a massacre."[122]

As Mosley points out, Nehru flung Tara Singh five times into jail in the next ten years. If Sir Evan had done his duty, what is most likely is that Tara Singh would have remained a prisoner in the Lahore Fort until the exchange of prisoners between the two dominions many months later and after the situation had been brought under control. The fact that Nehru's Government with the enthusiastic co-operation of Gandhi and the Government of Pakistan as represented by the Quaid and Liaqat were able to bring the situation under control in almost six weeks from the date of Partition and introduce some sort of order, while Jenkins and his Government failed to control the riots during the preceding six months is a sad commentary on the performance of the last British Governor.

With regard to the proposed action against Master Tara Singh, it has to be remembered that not only was he preaching violence in general, but the Punjab police had got evidence of Hindu witnesses who had been provided with bombs and ammunition by him, and with whom he had discussed the plans of blowing up special trains from Delhi to Karachi, and his proposal to kill the Quaid-i Azam during state drive at Karachi on the Indepen-

122. Mosley, op. cit., pp. 215–16.

dence Day. The statements of two of these witnesses have now been published at Appendix I of *Note on the Sikh Plan*, issued by the Government of West Punjab (Pakistan) in the beginning of 1948. Presumably, they formed part of the material which was placed, according to Campbell-Johnson, by an officer of the Punjab Criminal Investigation Department before a "secret conclave" of Patel, Jinnah and Liaqat[123] called by Mountbatten after the Partition Council meeting on 5 August 1947. According to Campbell-Johnson, the Quaid and Liaqat demanded the arrest of Tara Singh and other Sikh leaders, but Patel was strongly opposed to this course, while Mountbatten "was prepared to support the arrests, but only if the authorities on the spot felt that this would be a wise step". One Pakistani version of these deliberations is slightly different. According to this (unpublished) version, Mountbatten himself suggested the arrests, and had in fact called the small, top-level meeting to discuss the proposal, but when Patel objected (and raised doubts about the accuracy of the reports) Mountbatten postponed action with the results that are known.

The responsibility of Governors Glancy and Jenkins for acts of omission and commission was general and in the domain of policy. More definite and more damaging are the allegations against individual British officers. On 26 August 1947, Dhanwantri, who has been described as "a reliable Indian social worker,"[124] left Amritsar for Delhi in the company of Baba Gurmukh Singh to acquaint Pandit Nehru and others with what was going on in the Punjab. The account which he gave to the Indian Prime Minister was later amplified in the form of a booklet, *Bleeding Punjab Warns*. Unluckily, no copy of the original

123. Campbell-Johnson, op. cit., p. 149. Curiously enough, Nehru's name is not mentioned among the participants.

124. D.F. Karaka, *Betrayal in India*, p. 64. Probably L. Dhanwantri was the old revolutionary who was convicted in the Lahore Conspiracy Case (in 1928 ?). From an account of an interview which the representatives of Muslim refugees in Sharifpura camp had with Pandit Nehru during his visit to Amritsar on 23 August 1947, it appears that Dhanwantri was responsible for saving the life of Dr Saif-ud-Din Kitchlew (*vide Dastan-i Turk* by Sufi Ghulam Muhammad Turk, p. 94).

pamphlet is available in Pakistan, but we have before us an Urdu translation which appeared at Hyderabad, Deccan, under the title *Punjab ki Khuni Dastan*, and is a most revealing document. Dhanwantri underlines the fact that violence was at its worst in five districts of Lahore, Multan, Rawalpindi, Amritsar and Jullunder which had British Deputy Commissioners and the attitude of the District officers was most unhelpful.[125] He relates, for example, that when information regarding the massacre of Muslims in Chauk Paragdas, Amritsar, at the hands of the Sikhs reached Rawalpindi, feelings amongst local Muslims were greatly inflamed. A deputation representing Muslim League and other organisations approached the British Deputy Commissioner and represented that trouble was anticipated and precautionary measures should be taken. He gave a vague reply. Next day, stabbing started and these representatives again met the District Magistrate. They urged that effective measures should be taken, as otherwise rioting would spread to the rural areas. The Deputy Commissioner assured them that necessary steps were being taken. When, within a few days, large-scale violence and incendiarism started in the countryside, the Congress leaders of Rawalpindi approached the officer and begged him to take measures for protecting the minorities. His reply was: "Go to Sardar Patel and Nehru. It is their Government now. When you wish to send away the British, with what face do you come to us for help ?"[126] Even worse than this brutal cynicism of the British Deputy Commissioner—C.L. Coate, O.B.E., I.C.S.—was his

125. *Punjab ki Khuni Dastan*, p. 7. The Deputy Commissioner of Sheikhupura (C.H. Disney) was an Anglo-Indian. When the liberal leader, Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru, issued a statement alleging "that a British officer had been responsible for not preventing a large number of casualties at Sheikhupura," Mountbatten rang up Nehru and protested that the statement was "both untrue and libellous". Ultimately, Nehru was persuaded to issue a statement "based on reliable evidence which categorically denies that the culprit at Sheikhupura was of British nationality" (Campbell-Johnson, op. cit., p. 206). What Nehru stated was strictly and quantitatively a *half-truth*! [Incidentally Superintendent of Police, Sheikhupura, was also an Anglo-Indian.]

126. *Punjab ki Khuni Dastan*, p. 8. Retranslated from Urdu.

failure to take preventive measures when he was warned and to initiate effective action when the trouble broke out. Penderel Moon has also observed that while "Multan authorities acted vigorously" and by prompt despatch of troops quickly brought the trouble under control, the position was different in Rawalpindi, where "it was more than a week before large-scale use of troops began to effect an improvement". He also records that, although in Amritsar two principal bazars were burnt to the ground and there was looting in practically every part of the city, "not a shot was fired by the police while this destruction was in progress".[127] It is to be noted that British officers were in charge of Amritsar and Rawalpindi, the province was being administered directly under Governor Jenkins and the events and administrative inaction relate to early March, i.e. full five months before the transfer of power.

The attitude of the Deputy Commissioner of Rawalpindi had very ugly and serious consequences. In this district the Sikhs were the moneylenders and shopkeepers in villages, but did not perform their functions with that outward humility which their Hindu counterparts displayed in other areas. Their operations had led to the dispossession of many Muslim landowners and relations between the two communities were normally strained. Now came the news of the massacre of Muslims in Chauk Paragdas at the hands of the Sikhs of Amritsar. The resultant reaction was wild. Not only was there a destruction of Hiudu and Sikh property at Murree and elswhere, but there were violent reprisals against Sikhs in which "Pathans from across the Indus"[128] joined. Many Sikhs lost their lives, and some were subjected to personal indignity including, it was alleged, the shaving of their heads and beards. Some may, themselves, have cut their beards to conceal their identity, and save their lives.[129] When the

127. Moon, op. cit., p. 72.

128. J.W. Spain, *The Pathan Borderland*, p. 197.

129. Khosla records instances of this happening elsewhere. He relates with regard to Jaranwala, where trouble broke out on 8 September : "The next morning the Muslims announced that the Sikhs would not be allowed to live in Jaranwala. On hearing this many Sikhs had their beards cut as they

survivors were evacuated and reached Amritsar, there was widespread bitterness. It also gave a handle to those who were even otherwise planning to seize power on the departure of the British. "Revenge Rawalpindi" became the battle-cry of Master Tara Singh. As Dhanwantri points out, Sikh sufferers from Rawalpindi were taken from Gurudwara to Gurudwara, and *Shaheedi Jathas* (Suicide Squads) were formed in every Sikh village, in readiness for the day of vengeance. The vast camp organised in Patiala State for refugees from Rawalpindi became the centre of anti-Muslim preparations. Thus the trouble at Rawalpindi to which the British Deputy Commissioner contributed by his inaction, cynicism and general administrative failure, became an important link in the chain of disurbances which enveloped the Punjab.

Dhanwantri quotes the remarks of Macdonald, Home Secretry and one of the policy-makers of the Punjab Government, for whom he has the severest condemnation. When some Hindu and Sikh leaders approached Macdonald for prompt relief to Hindu refugees, his reply was: "Do not worry. They will readily forget their troubles when they will see their co-religionists taking revenge from Muslims in central and eastern Punjab."[130]

So far as the responsibility of some British officers for happenings in the Punjab is concerned, it may be relevant to reproduce the analysis of D.F. Karaka, former President of Oxford University Union and a prominent Indian journalist. He had toured the area at the invitation of the Indian army at the height of disturbances, and the following quotation is from his subsequent book *Betrayal in India*:

"While Britain honoured its pledges on August 15, 1947, and gave to my country its freedom, the fact remained that many of those Englishmen who were left behind to carry out the details of the transfer of power did not share that enthusiasm of His Majesty's government or of the British people over the decision to quit India.

believed that a Hindu appearance would ensure their safety" (Khosla, op. cit., p. 167).

130. *Punjab ki Khuni Dastan*, pp. 8–9. Retranslated from Urdu.

"They rather begrudged it.

"They resented that this country, which had been their preserve for over 150 years, should be handed over lock, stock and barrel to the 'natives'. After being the overlords in India they resented having to fade into insignificance in some English suburb.

"One can only judge individual guilt in retrospect. But, even now, those who viewed the Punjab closely are conscious of the part played by some of the civilian officials and military officers in allowing the situation to develop as it did."[131]

Same is the analysis of the American biographer of General Thimayya and presumably of the General himself:

"It now became more obvious that some British officers were indifferent to the fate of the two new countries and were making no serious attempt to improve the situation. At the higher levels, British officers and officials accepted the policy of handing over the two countries to their new governments in a peaceful condition. Some junior officers, however, presumably wanted conditions to worsen to show the world that the subcontinent could not exist without British power."[132]

In his analysis of the tragic happenings in the Punjab, Penderal Moon has also overlooked a basic step which greatly facilitated them and which really made the exchange of population between East and West Punjab inevitable. This was the general permission given to all Government servants to "opt" for areas of their choice. Muslim League leaders, anxious to have minimum dislocation at the time of Partition, wanted that all Indian officials should continue to work wherever they were serving and that only British officers should be given the option to retire if they so desired. The Congress leaders objected to this and not only permitted all officials of the Central Government, high and low, to opt for India or Pakistan, according to their preference, but also forced the governments of the provinces which like the Punjab had been divided, to give such option to all their officials.

131. D.F. Karaka, op. cit., pp. 47–48.

132. Humphrey Evans, *Thimayya of India : A Soldier's Life*, p. 250.

It would be pertinent to reproduce what Nawabzadah Liaqat Ali Khan said, with regard to the option given to the officials of the Central Government, in his Presidential Address to Pakistan Muslim League Council on 20 February 1949. Recalling the initial difficulties of the Pakistan Government, he said :

"Another difficulty we had to encounter was that all Government servants were given the option to serve in whichever of the two Dominions they liked, although it was known that majority of experienced high-grade officials being non-Muslims, it would be difficult to run the Government of Pakistan. We had urged in vain that the Government servants should be compelled to stay on where they were—arguing that there was no reason why those who could serve a foreign government, could not serve their own. The agreed percentage of Muslim representation in the All-India Services was 25, but it was found on actual calculation to be not more than eleven, with a nominal proportion of gazetted officers. Just think how short of officers we were at the start. Peons were plentiful, but peons cannot run the Government."[133]

So far as the Government servants of the provinces which had been divided were concerned, the developments in the key province of the Punjab have been described by Dr. Satya M. Rai in her account of the partition of the Punjab. She says:

"*Option to the Services.* It was decided by the [Punjab] Partition Committee that the services recruited on a district, division or circle basis might remain where they happened to be on the date of partition. The Partition Committee gave assurance to the employees that it would make adjustments acccording to the wishes and convenience of the individuals within a reasonable time. . . . But this decision had to be altered on the recommendation of the Special Committee of the Cabinet, in the Government of India which suggested that every government servant should be given the opportunity to select the Government he wished to serve. Accordingly, the Partition Committee gave option to all the government employees."[134]

The present writer was informed at that time by a member of the Interim Government (Mr I.I. Chundrigar, Commerce Minister) that the decision about giving the right of "option" to all

133. *Speeches and Statements of Quaid-i-Millat Liaquat Ali Khan*, p. 209.
134. Mrs. Satya M. Rai, *Partition of the Punjab*, p. 62.

Government officials was taken on the insistence of Sardar Patel, who as Home Minister was in charge of Services and said that many Hindu officers had conscientious objection to serving in Pakistan and he would not be a party to their coercion.

As practically all non-Muslim Government servants opted for India (and East Punjab, in case of provincial or subordinate posts), the decision adopted by the Government of India meant that after 15 August or so no Hindu official was to be left in West Punjab and the same would be the position with regard to Muslims in East Punjab. The decision became known, first, with regard to the employees of the Central Government—e.g. Railways, Posts and Telegraphs. A Hindu daily of Lahore wrote an editorial at this time, trying to make the leaders at Delhi realise the consequences of this decision. The editor pointed out that, according to this decision, if a Hindu travelled from Rawalpindi to Lahore he would come across no Hindu officer, no Hindu railwayman, no Hindu policeman and probably no Hindu providing water or meals on the train! The decision really cut the ground from under the feet of the minorities.[135] The problem was further aggravated when in East Punjab the Muslim policemen were disarmed even before 15 August. Ian Stephens considers the disarming of the Muslim policemen in Amritsar District on 10 August by the Hindu Deputy Commissioner-designate as a crucial factor in the deterioration of the situation,[136] but what was

135. Not only did the general option given to the Government officials leave minorities unprotected, but the official exodus also stimulated general migration. It may be interesting to read the observations of Sri Prakasa, the first Indian High Commissioner in Pakistan. He says in his *Pakistan: Birth and Early Days* (p. 37):

> "The partition of the country of 1947 presented the strange spectacle of such vast exoduses for political reasons for perhaps the first time in our history. It all began with the servants of the Central Government. They had been given the right to opt either for India or Pakistan. I do not know if those who agreed to this condition realised that Central Government servants did not only consist of high officers—executive aud judicial—but also the humblest peon in the office and the sweeper at the railway station."

136. Ian Stephens, op. cit. (1st Edn.), p. 183. After this the lives of the Muslim policemen were in danger, and in any case, they could give no help in maintaining law and order. Many of them must have taken early steps to

happening was on a much bigger scale and owing to the insistence of the mighty Sardar.[137] Writing about the Congress leaders, Penderel Moon has stated :

"In retrospect it seems as though a curse was laid on them at this time which compelled them over the next ten years invariably to act in such a way as to bring about exactly the opposite result to that which they intended. They passionately desired to preserve the unity of India. They consistently acted so as to make its partition certain."[138]

Ian Stephens refers to Nehru's speech on 10 July 1946, regarding "Grouping" and the powers of the Constituent Assembly as an illustration of the truth of Moon's remarks. Actually many more instances could be found from the life of the strong man Patel, who—unwittingly—contributed even more to the partitioning of the subcontinent and consolidation of this division. Far-reaching results of his refusal to give up the Home portfolio and his offer of the Finance portfolio to the Muslim League in the belief that the Muslim minister would not be able to cope with the responsibilities of Finance have been described elsewhere. Even more important were the consequences of his insistence on the "option" to all Government servants. He believed that by withdrawing the experienced Hindu officers the administration of Pakistan—which he was convinced would be shortlived—would crumble down quickly. This did not happen, but minorities were left unprotected and developments took place which "brought about exactly the opposite result" to what Patel had intended.

There is no doubt that Patel and his advisers (and in the services, etc.) made a serious miscalculation regarding the prospects of Pakistan. Brecher says that "in the atmosphere of tension, of fears and of hopes which pervaded India throughout 1947, there was a widespread belief that Partition would be short-

escape to Pakistan. Judge Khosla blames these disarmed policemen for throwing the machinery of law and order "completely out of gear, by large-scale desertions" (op. cit., p. 278).

137. The administrative dislocation in the area constituting East Punjab may be judged by the fact that against its pre-Partition police force of 20,672, it had only 7185 "effectives" (Mrs. Satya M. Rai, op. cit., p. 95).

138. Penderel Moon, op. cit., p. 14.

lived".[139] The earliest prominent advocate of this point of view, as of acceptance of division of India by Congress on the basis of division of the Punjab and Bengal, was Sardar Patel. Kanji Dwarkadas has published an important letter addressed to him by Patel on 4 March 1947, i.e. before the arrival of Mountbatten in India. In it, after pointing out that the Muslim League "could not have Punjab as a whole or Bengal without civil war," he said:

"I do not think that the British Government will agree to division. In the end they will see the wisdom of handing over the reins of Government to the strongest party. Even if they do not do so, they will not help the minority in securing or maintaining division, and a strong centre with the whole of India, except Eastern Bengal and a part of the Punjab, Sind and Baluchistan, enjoying full autonomy under that centre, will be so powerful that the remaining portions will eventually come in." [140]

Patel's position is made clear in an important speech which he made on 11 August 1947 and which Mosley calls "a bucket of water" in the Quaid's face, in relation to the Quaid's very conciliatory message given on the eve of his departure for Pakistan. Patel began by saying that "under the prevailing conditions in the country partition on the present pattern was the best thing possible" and went on to express his conviction that this partition was temporary. He said: "I, however, strongly believe that those who have seceded today will be disillusioned soon and their union with the rest of India is assured. What nature and God had intended to be one can on no account be split in two for all time." [141]

In the course of this speech Patel repeatedly gave expression to his view that the division of India was temporary. He stated that he had agreed to it as he "felt convinced that in order to keep India united it must be divided now". He, later, went to say:

"Today the partition of India is a settled fact and yet it is an unreal fact. The partition, I hope, however, removes the poison from the body politic of India. This, I am sure, would result in

139. Brecher, op. cit., p. 377.

140. *Sunday Standard* (Bombay), 26 April 1959. [The letter has now been reproduced in Kanji Dwarkadas, *Ten Years to Freedom*, pp. 207–08.]

141. *For A United India—Speeches of Sardar Patel, 1947–50*, p. 125.

the seceding areas desiring to reunite with the rest of India.

"India is one and indivisible. One cannot divide the sea or split the running waters of a river. The Muslims have their roots in India. Their sacred places and their cultural centres are located here in India. I do not know what they can do in Pakistan and it will not be long before they begin to return." [142]

With this assessment of the prospects of Pakistan, it is not surprising that Patel tried to ensure its collapse by depriving the new state of experienced administrators. There was probably another reason also. Amongst the important officials who had gathered round Patel at Delhi were some on deputation from the areas which were to constitute Pakistan. Others—at Lahore, etc.—were co-operating with them in steps detrimental to the new state. These officers were apprehensive that in the new state notice would be taken of their improper activities and they did not wish to continue in their old areas. A study of this aspect of the question has not been made, but there are indications of what was being done to deprive Pakistan of her due share. For example, Wilfrid Russell has narrated the story of the Lahore locos:

"It seems that a few months [previous to the Partition] the North-Western Railway, which operates the huge network of the railways covering the Punjab, Sind and the North-Western Province, had bought a number of new locos from America. They had been stabled in the yards at Lahore and were just ready for use when the announcement of Partition had been made. . . . Gradually in the six weeks since June 3rd every one of these locos had been unobtrusively moved away from Lahore and shunted on to the other systems to the south, so that when Partition came on August 15th, they would be far beyond the grasp of the Pakistanis." [143]

The "Hindu Railway officer" who was "responsible for this intelligent forward planning" was not an exception. Such measures were being taken on an extensive scale. One example vividly illustrates what was happening. It will be recalled that a big Asian Conference was held at Delhi some months before the Partition. An exhibition was arranged at the same time and

142. Ibid., p. 127.

143. Wilfrid Russell, *Indian Summer*, p. 109.

important objects of antiquity were collected from all parts of the subcontinent, including Mohenjo Daro and Harappa. No effort was made by the Hindu Superintendent of Archaeology in the Northern Circle to get them back to the museums to which they belonged, and after the Partition, under one pretext or another, the Government of India refused to part with them. The position, at present, is that while Mohenjo Daro and Harappa are in Pakistan, important items of the museums located there are in India!

Such instances can be multiplied, and it appears that what happened was on an extensive and a planned basis. The officials concerned must have been apprehensive that they would be called upon to explain their negligence—or collusion—and they could not have been keen to serve in the areas now constituting Pakistan. They must have influenced Patel and his advisers.

Whatever be the causes, the results of "option" given to the officers were far-reaching. According to original reports, the Finance Secretary and many other key officers of the Government of Pakistan would have been Hindus. Now, they were given general option and all opted for India.

Sardar Patel's insistence on general option to all Government servants of the Central Government and the divided provinces may have been an error of judgment. Many of his actions which aggravated the problems of Partition were the results of deliberate policy. All of Sardar's speeches have not been collected, nor has he left any autobiography or memoir. One of his colleagues—N.V. Gadgil—who belonged to Patel's group in the Indian Cabinet has, however, left his reminiscences published under the title *Government from Inside*. Gadgil has made crystal clear not only his admiration for Sardar Patel but their ideological kinship, and the views expressed there and attributed to Patel leave no doubt about the gulf that separated Patel and Gadgil not only from Pandit Nehru but also from Mahatma Gandhi. Pandit Nehru and Maulana Azad both stood for secularism. Mahatma Gandhi dearly held the tenets of Hinduism and its traditions, but he was too far-sighted not to realise the danger of allowing hatred and narrow-minded bigotry to obscure the vision, particularly in a

multiple society like India's. Patel and Gadgil paid lip sympathy to secularism—and there were some occasions when Patel rose above Gadgil's level—but normally it is difficult to distinguish between the rank Hindu communalism of Jan Singh and the pseudo-secularism of Gadgil and Patel. Gadgil reveals that "Nehru was greatly annoyed when once Vallabhbhai suggested mutual exchange of Hindu and Muslim population and proposal of division of land between India and Pakistan". He gives his own opinion "that such an exchange would have been beneficial in the long run". Gadgil does not mention that this was a suggestion which was not approved by Mahatma Gandhi either. It has been recorded by his grand-niece, Shrimati Manuben Gandhi, that Mahatma Gandhi's own Secretary, Payarelal, raised the question of exchange of population (in relation to Noakhali) and was firmly brushed aside.[144]

With the basic attitude of Sardar Patel being what it was, it should cause no surprise that he was unhelpful at the time of the Partition and greatly enlarged the area of conflict. The position becomes clear if statements of Liaqat Ali Khan made in Lahore on 10 October 1947 and on 14 October 1947 are studied. In the first statement Liaqat enunciated the policy of the Government of Pakistan: "We had indeed hoped that the evacuation of Muslims from East Punjab would not be extended to the Ambala Division" while Indian Ministers were proposing "to include Muslims from the Delhi Province and the western districts of the U.P. in the evacuation programme".[145] Liaqat referred to a passage in Sardar Patel's speech on 30 September in which he was reported to have said that "India's interest lay in getting of her men and women across the border and sending out all Muslims from East Punjab". Liaqat commented:

"If this report is correct, it is most regrettable that the Indian government should as a matter of deliberate policy be sending all Muslims out of East Punjab and trying to uproot non-Muslims out of Pakistan."[146]

144. A. Manuben Gandhi, *Last Glimpses of Bapu*, p. 303.
145. *Speeches and Statements of Quaid-i-Millat Liaquat Ali Khan*, p. 125.
146. Ibid., p. 126.

Next day, Sardar Patel confirmed the remarks attributed to him and made allegations which were contradicted by Liaqat by suitable quotations. Incidentally, Liaqat revealed that, in order to deal with the allegations of inadequate action by respective governments, Pakistan Government had put forward a "proposal for neutral observers from U.N.O. but Sardar Patel and his Government turned it down". [147] These facts are useful if one is to understand how the holocaust in the Punjab started and how it rapidly spread in spite of the best efforts of Mahatma Gandhi, Quaid-i Azam, Pandit Nehru and Liaqat Ali Khan. This does not, however, mean that Muslims in West Punjab had not contributed to this sorry state of affairs or that nothing ugly and disgraceful happened there. Foreign observers have, however, mostly held that in West Pakistan the steps were unorganised, and generally the object was loot except where feelings had been inflamed by the accounts of atrocities in East Punjab spread by incoming refugees.

What Moon has stated about the Congress leaders obtaining results opposite to what they intended[148] is another way of saying that they were found lacking in higher statesmanship. To some extent, their actions which brought about and strengthened Pakistan can be attributed to the fact that some of them—like Patel—were not desperately keen about the unity of the country if this involved sharing of power with true representatives of the Muslims. They were not well informed about the Muslim viewpoint [149] and its sources of strength, but perhaps it is also true that with the exception of Mahatma Gandhi, who was kept out of the way when crucial decisions were being taken and later assassinated, the Congress had no statesman equal to the great issues confront-

147. Ibid.. p. 129. 148. Moon, op. cit., p. 14.

149. In spite of his many solid gifts and achievements, Sardar Patel was a man of amazingly narrow outlook. There is a well-known anecdote, giving his disdainful reference to Nehru's interest in foreign affairs. "Indonesia, Indonesia, let me see—where is Indonesia? You better ask Jawaharlal about that" (Brecher, op. cit., p. 432). Patel was quite capable of saying: "Iqbal? Who is Iqbal?" In 1931 while presiding at the annual session of All-India National Congress, he said something, and proudly added: "The foregoing shows you how uninterested I am in many things that interest the intelligentsia" (quoted by Brecher, op. cit., p. 392).

ing India. This failure of statesmanship has persisted after the Partition (and, perhaps, may be taken as a normal feature of Indian approach to Pakistan). When Partition came and for long thereafter, there were no customs barriers between India and Pakistan. Pakistan's currency was being handled by the Reserve Bank of India. There were no passports or visas, and if mutual relations had not been poisoned by anger, greed and hauteur, these links might well have continued. The Government of India, however, acted in a manner which made the severance of these relations inevitable. In fact, it took the lead in severing many links. On the top of it came the trouble in Kashmir. "Thereafter," as pointed out by Menon, "events gravely affecting the relations between the two countries followed one another in quick succession. The result was further bitterness and estrangement."[150]

An analysis of happenings in the Punjab in 1947 and apportionment of responsibility for them is now of historical interest only. One thing is certain. Irrespective of whoever planned, countenanced and directly or indirectly contributed to the dreadful happenings in East Punjab, they, more than anything else, led to the consolidation of Pakistan. These happenings revealed, even to the critics of the Quaid, the extent of hatred and barbarity which lay beneath the surface and convinced them that "amputation" was the only remedy. All Muslims were now convinced of the wisdom of the Quaid's decision, and, what is more, they saw what grim alternative faced them. Not only did they close their ranks, but rose to the occasion, to meet the terrible challenge which confronted them. These happenings consolidated Pakistan in another way also. When the stream of refugees—naked, maimed, physically wrecked—with their horrible tales reached West Pakistan, there was an inevitable reaction and exchange of population took place between East and West Punjab, under which West Punjab became solidly Muslim and East Punjab solidly Hindu-Sikh. If there was any slight chance of the reversal of Partition, this exchange of population (to which Patel readily agreed) had destroyed that chance for ever. The blood of the

150. Menon, op. cit., p. 442.

innocent sufferers and martyrs had not flown in vain. It had cemented Pakistan as nothing else could.

VII. Governor-General of Pakistan

The problems which the Quaid-i Azam had to face as Governor-General of Pakistan were not only due to the happenings in East Punjab and the need to receive and provide for millions of refugees.

What immensely increased the difficulties of the new state was the fact that it had yet to organise itself. A part of the Government records had beeen destroyed while in transit through the Indian territory and the personnel for the new Government of Pakistan had yet to be assembled from various provinces of India and absorbed into a suitable instrument of administration. The difficulties which the Government of India was raising in the way of Pakistan getting her agreed share of army equipment have been graphically described by Field-Marshal Auchinleck in a historic letter to London which has now been published by his biographer.[151] What was true of Pakistan was even more true of the key province of West Punjab. The old province of the undivided Punjab had been in the throes of a civil war since the beginning of March 1947 and Sir Evan Jenkins's Government had totally failed to restore order in spite of Draconian powers assumed by him.

On 11 August, i.e. four days before the new West Punjab Government came into office, the Lahore correspondent of an Anglo-Indian newspaper wrote: "The truth is that today there is virtually no administration in the Punjab." A senior British officer, who had held high appointments in the Punjab, was in Lahore on 15 August, and has recorded his impressions on seeing the situation: "I could not help reflecting that we were leaving Lahore in the same state of turmoil and disorder as we had found it almost a century earlier." [152]

Apart from the chaos in West Punjab and general admin-

151. John Connel, op. cit., pp. 920–24.
152. Penderel Moon, op. cit., p. 115.

istrative difficulties, the state was faced with serious disorganisation of communications. An unprecedented exchange of staff between India and Pakistan was taking place on the Railways and in Post and Telegraph Department, and to this was added the dislocation in the railway system owing to acute shortage of coal.

Naturally, all this had a very depressing and disturbing effect on the population, and the presence of the Quaid at the helm of affairs must be considered as one of the most important factors which enabled the new state to grapple with the problems and build up an efficient system of administration. He realised that the morale of the public was exceedingly low, and set about inspiring them with a new energy. His first step was to address the Government servants. On 11 October 1947, Civil, Naval, Military and Air Force officers of the Pakistan Government were assembled in the Khaliqdina Hall of Karachi, and the Quaid gave his clarion call. He started by mentioning the problems which the new state had to face and then turned to the happenings in the Punjab. He continued :

"The disorders in the Punjab have brought in their wake the colossal problem of the rehabilitation of millions of displaced persons. This is going to tax our energies and resources to the utmost extent. It has made the difficulties inherent in the building of a new state, I referred to earlier, manifold. Are we going to allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by the immensity of the task that is confronting us and let our new-born State founder under the cruel and dastardly blows struck by our enemies?

"This is a challenge to our very existence and if we are to survive as a nation and are to translate our dreams about Pakistan into reality, we shall have to grapple with the problem facing us with redoubled zeal and energy. Our masses are today disorganised and disheartened by the cataclysm that has befallen them. Their morale is exceedingly low and we shall have to do something to pull them out of the slough of despondency and galvanise them into activity. All this throws additional responsibility on Government servants to whom our people are looking for guidance."[153]

153. Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, op. cit., p. 23.

He sympathised with the Government servants who had suffered bereavements and lost properties, and went on to say :

"But are all these sacrifices, that we have been called upon to make, to be in vain? Are we going to sit down and mope over our losses? If we do so, we shall be behaving just as our enemies want us to behave. We shall be playing their game and will soon be suppliants for their mercy. The fitting response to the machinations of our enemies would be a grim determination to get down to the task of building our State on strong and firm found ations, a State which should be fit for our childern to live in. This requires work, work and more work."[154]

Later that month, he delivered another inspiring speech at a mammoth rally at Lahore, and addressed the nation on the radio. The result of these and other measures taken by the Quaid was that the drooping spirits revived. The Government servants, high and low, rose to the occasion and the nation was able to pull through.

The Quaid had spent all his life as a politician in the opposition camp and never had to shoulder the responsibilities of office. Now he was being tested in a new field and he did not fail. He remained steadfast in the face of calamities and was cool and unruffled in circumstances which would have been most trying for an old established state. In face of the gravest provocation—e.g. at Junagarh—he refused to be nettled and concentrated on one job of getting the new state on its feet. A very difficult situation was created by the Radcliff Award, which was particularly unpopular in the Punjab. The Quaid faced the question with courage and on correct, constitutional lines. In a broadcast from Lahore he said about the Award :

"It is an unjust, incomprehensible and even perverse Award. It may be wrong, unjust and perverse and it may not be a judicial but a political award, but we had agreed to abide by it and it is binding upon us. As honourable people we must abide by it."[155]

Luckily he was able to collect an efficient team to assist him. Nawabzadah Liaqat Ali Khan, whom the Quaid had called his "right hand" in the days of struggle for Pakistan, became the Prime Minister, and efforts were made to attract talent from all parts of

154. Ibid., p. 23.

155. Ibid., pp. 32–33.

the country. The new Government which had yet to complete the process of organisation and consolidation of the state had naturally to proceed on cautious and even conservative lines, but in certain important matters it embarked on a far-reaching change of policy, which was amply justified by events. One of the most important decisions which the Quaid-i Azam took was about the Pathan tribal areas in the north-west of Pakistan and the strength of forces to be maintained therein. He completely reversed the policy of maintaining large forces in Waziristan and other tribal areas, involving some of the biggest items of military expenditure of the old undivided Government of India. Some experts doubted the wisdom of the new step and prophesied that the withdrawal of troops would be accompanied by large-scale attacks by the tribesmen and losses and casualties. The Quaid-i Azam, after carefuly weighing the pros and cons of the matter, decided to approach the question from an angle different from the one adopted by the British Government. Pakistan completely withdrew its forces from Razmak and other strategic points without any incident at all and with considerable increase in the tribal goodwill. This was the beginning of a "New Deal" for these areas, which has brought Pakistan high praise from thinkers and writers like the historian Arnold Toynbee.[156] Pakistan continued to pay subsidies to the tribal Maliks, and respect traditional arrangements in the tribal belt but, otherwise, it introduced a completely new policy. Instead of maintaining large forces and incurring heavy military expenditure, Pakistan concentrated on economic amelioration, spread of education, and medical relief, and earned rich dividends in goodwill.

The new Government gave proofs of wisdom and ability in tackling other questions also. India and Pakistan have plenty of very intricate common problems to solve and events after the Partition have certainly not facilitated their solution. A big operation

156. See Arnold J. Toynbee, *Between Oxus and Jumna*, pp. 153–59. His main conclusion after a study on the spot is: "Pakistan does pursue a Forward Policy on the frontiers, and a vigorous one, but its key-instruments are not weapons of war: they are dispensaries, hospitals, schools, sports, and above all economic development" (p. 155).

like the partition of a subcontinent must leave loose ends of great size and complexity. The Quaid-i Azam's Government, however, followed a policy of goodwill and friendliness towards India, and the two Prime Ministers were able to establish friendly personal relations. The Quaid-i Azam in an interview with a Swiss journalist himself offered to enter into arrangements for "Joint Defence" with India. The policy of good neighbourliness was, however, followed without sacrifice of Pakistan's major interests and it is refreshing to recall one instance of courage and self-confidence displayed by the new Government. At the end of December 1947, the liquid financial resources of Pakistan were at their lowest. At the time of the Partition Pakistan had received Rs 20 crores as an opening balance and its share of the undivided assets of the old Government of India was to be determined later. This share was subsequently fixed by mutual agreement at Rs 75 crores and, after deduction of the original Rs 20 crores, was due to be paid in the latter half of December. The Government of India thought that it might benefit by the temporary difficulties of Pakistan and withheld payment of Pakistan's share until it agreed to accept a solution of Kashmir problem on lines which Pakistan did not consider fair or proper. Pakistan's needs at this moment were very pressing and there are plenty of instances in world history when new governments (e.g. U.S.S.R.) have agreed to such adjustments to gain the necessary breathing space. The Pakistan Government, however, cheerfully accepted the risk of losing, at least for the time being, its balance of Rs 55 crores, but refused to do anything which would imperil the future of the Kashmir Muslims.

The Governor-General had limited responsibility for administrative details, but the Quaid-i Azam was much more than a Governor-General. He was the Father of the Nation. He was the final arbiter in all national disputes, and so matters were referred to him, which would not concern an ordinary Governor-General. The part he played in such matters can best be illustrated by the outcome of the dispute regarding separation of Karachi from Sind. The Sindhis in general, and Sind Government in particular, were opposed to the transfer of the administrative control of Karachi,

the capital of Pakistan as well as of Sind, to the Centre. Sind Muslim League Party was opposed to the move, and even a threat of Direct Action was held out. There was a powerful agitation in the press, and there were demonstrations in the streets of Karachi and elsewhere. Ultimately, a deputation of representatives of Sind waited on the Quaid-i Azam, and once he gave his verdict in favour of the move, the whole agitation died down, as if by magic. Not a soul stirred, not a word of criticism appeared in the press, when control over Karachi, the capital of Sind Government, passed from Sind to Pakistan.

Apart from being the Governor-General, the Quaid-i Azam, towards the end of his life, assumed responsibility for the newly created "Ministry of States and Tribal Affairs". His memorable achievement in this sphere was the smooth settling of the question of the accession of the huge border state of Kalat, which could have given much more trouble to Pakistan than settlement of Hyderabad question brought to India. These preoccupations naturally told on the Quaid's health, which had never been robust. His life had been, in reality, a triumph of iron will and self-discipline over physical fragility, but the affairs and the anxieties of the infant state severely drained his energy. His colleagues tried to relieve him of all routine work, but he was so habituated to doing thoroughly everything he took in hand, that the efforts of his well-wishers were often of little avail. He would, for example, preside over the meetings of the Committee for the Quaid-i Azam Relief Fund for Refugee Rehabilitation for hours, and meticulously examine each item of subscription and expenditure. In June, he was compelled, under medical advice, to leave Karachi and stay at the higher altitude of Ziarat in Buluchistan. Here also files, deputations and Ministers followed him, and on 3 June he insisted on returning to Karachi to take part in the opening of the State Bank of Pakistan —the symbol of economic independence of the new Dominion. The strain of the journey and the prevailing heat of Karachi, however, adversly affected him and he had to return to Quetta within forty-eight hours. Here he showed signs of improvement, but an attack of influenza and bronchitis resulted in a serious set-back, and led to complications. On 11 September 1948, he was

flown to Karachi in a sinking state, and passed away peacefully the same evening.

VIII. Jinnah, the Man and the Statesman

1

"Let there be no mistake about it. One who wants to understand Jinnah must shed the popular prejudices against him."[157]

The Quaid-i Azam's superb qualities as a political leader are widely recognised.[158] Justice has, however, not been done to him as a man. The grim struggle which he had to wage within a very limited time for the attainment of a near-impossible task left no room for kid-glove diplomacy, and the fact that his objectives ran counter to the wishes and sentiments of the British, the Hindus, the nationalist Muslims and the Punjab Unionists was bound to influence their attitude. Even ordinary Muslims have not been much more successful at understanding this gaunt, lonely figure. Inevitably, they have recreated his image according to their own fancy, and forgotten that, although in an effort to do his duty to his people, he created for them the largest Muslim state of the day, he was the product of a liberal, cosmopolitan atmosphere. From his early days he had worked with men like Dadabhoy Naoroji, Feroze Shah Mehta and Gokhale, and, although during the later years of his life the world knew him only as a Muslim leader, he always remained a lofty-minded, noble-souled, far-seeing statesman. His place is not only among the makers of the modern Muslim world but with the great statesmen of Asia, indeed the world.

About the Quaid's basic personal qualities there is not much difference of opinion. He came from a business community, and was businesslike, methodical and cool-headed. His integrity and incorruptibility have become a byword. From the beginning his ambition was to be a "Muslim Gokhale," but he did not give himself up to politics until he had made ample money from legal

157. M.S.M. Sharma, *Peeps into Pakistan*, p. 1.

158. Hugh Tinker, for example, writes: "he [Jinnah] emerges as perhaps the greatest tactician of all, British, Hindu, or Muslim" (op. cit., p. 161).

practice, and had become financially independent. His courage, moral as well as physical, strength of will and independence of outlook cannot but evoke admiration. Repeatedly his strong nerve was put to severe tests, but he always came out with flying colours. In 1943, he had to face an assassin armed with a dagger. He grappled with the man, and held him, till help became available. Four years later there was "a sudden but carefully planned eruption of Khaksars" at the Imperial Hotel, Delhi, where the All-India Muslim League Council was in session on the upper floor. With their *belchas* "they wrought the maximum of havoc in the minimum of time" and shouting "Get Jinnah" were half-way up the staircase leading to the room where the Quaid and the Council were in session, when the National Guards intervened, and Khaksars were dispersed by the police with the help of tear-gas. The Quaid "had no doubt but that the assault was an attempt on his life," but Campbell-Johnson, who has narrated the incident, records: "Jinnah behaved with great composure."[159] The Quaid's nerve was also tested in a less violent but, perhaps, more potent manner by Mountbatten.[160] He threatened the Quaid that "failing agreement," power may be transferred to the Interim Government. The Quaid remained "very calm" and gave a nonchalant answer. "Mountbatten felt that Jinnah's reaction was both abnormal and disturbing. It was certainlly shrewd. The *ballon d'essai* has gone up and come down again, providing only the evidence that Jinnah has a very stready nerve."[161]

The Quaid has been occasionally accused of showing lack of courtesy. Campbell-Johnson, for example, refers to his "hauteur and touchiness" on one occasion, and quotes Ismay about a communication addressed by him to Mountbatten: "It was a letter which I would not take from my king or send to a coolie."[162] Others have taken exception to some of his references to Mahatma Gandhi and Abul Kalam Azad. Those who have tried to understand the Quaid's mind have, however, realised that his sharp

159. Campbell-Johnson, op. cit., pp. 115, 116.
160. Ibid., p. 93.
161. Ibid., p. 94.
162. Ibid., p. 125.

reaction to certain individuals and on certain occasions was a part of his basic integrity and tendency to call a spade a spade. Lord Pethick-Lawrence's observations on this point give the clue to the Quaid's behaviour. In the course of a speech at London in January 1959, the former Secretary of State for India said :

"Now he had, of course, immense powers of intellect and also of persuasive eloquence which he used with such effect that the idea, which was at first an ideal only, became in the end a reality. Not only had he those gifts but I realized in him a man of very firm resolution, a man who when he had made a promise always kept it,[163] and *if he felt that anybody else with whom he was negotiating failed to keep his promise he reacted strongly*."[164]

While many of the Quaid's basic personal qualities are recognised, the grim struggle in which he was engaged during the most important years of his life and the animosities which this struggle generated have obscured others. It is not, for example, generally realised that at heart he was intensely humane, intrinsically fair-minded, completely free from ill-will towards other communities, and large-hearted where this did not involve sacrifice of public interests. In order to instil a sense of discipline in the Muslim League, he had to take drastic action against some of his lieutenants, and he acquired the reputation of a stern disciplinarian, but all this was done in the public cause. Personally he was large-

163. One hears occasional complaints that Pakistan did not come to the aid of Hyderabad at the time of the so-called Police Action. Of course, the Quaid was not alive at that time. India waited for the news of his death before moving her troops, but the caution with which the Quaid made promises can be seen even in this case. K.M. Munshi, who was India's Agent-General at Hyderabad at this time, quotes Nawab Ali Yavar Jang's book, *Hyderabad in Retrospect*, to say that when in July 1947, the Nawab of Chhatari asked the Quaid whether Pakistan would "come to the help of Hyderabad if it was faced by an ultimatum from India ?" "No," said Mr Jinnah as emphatically as ever, "Pakistan cannot help with material aid" (*vide* K.M. Munshi, *The End of An Era : Hyderabad Memories*, p. 54). Later, "when the Ittehad leaders talked of making preparations to fight India, he [Nawab of Chhatari] again approached Mr. Jinnah to inquire whether he could spare any arms for Hyderabad. 'Not a gun,' replied the Quaid-i Azam" (ibid., p. 55).

164. Quoted in Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, op. cit., 109. Italics ours.

hearted and fair-minded. Of these qualities evidence comes from an unexpected source. It is well known that the Quaid objected strongly to Sir Mirza Ismail's appointment as Prime Minister of Hyderabad. This led to a very unpleasant interview with the Nizam, but Sir Mirza says in his autobiography :

"Even afterwards, when we were no longer on friendly terms, Jinnah expressed to several of my friends his keen disappointment that I would not join him and help him to build a great Pakistan. In cases where he gained his point he could act magnanimously towards an opponent. A very distinguished person with whom he had fallen out in pre-Partition days told me how Jinnah offered to entrust him with the entire responsibility of guiding the foreign policy of Pakistan, as his own knowledge of foreign affairs, he said, was so meagre. My friend remarked that this instance was sufficient to show how magnanimous he could be."[165]

Sir Mirza did not name the "very distinguished person," but it is not difficult to surmise that he referred to Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan. It is well known that during Willingdon's viceroyalty, when Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan was the Executive Councillor, Mr Jinnah, in spite of his eminence in the political field, was kept out of the Round Table Conference in its later stages. Still the Quaid entrusted the Foreign Affairs of Pakistan to him as he considered him to be the most suitable person for the job. Indeed, the Quaid never permitted his personal sentiments to come in the way of his public duty.

Other qualities which are rarely attributed to him and of which evidence comes from another unexpected source are his freedom from communal hatred, keenness to safeguard Hindu interests in Pakistan and his humanity. M.S.M. Sharma who was editor of *The Daily Gazette*, Karachi, stayed on in Pakistan till the beginning of 1948. As a journalist, he had always taken a narrow, communal angle, and was so bitter against Pakistan that even the redoubtable Patel had to ask him to shed his "bitterness" before taking up his pen to write about the early days of Pakistan. His *Peeps into Pakistan* was written some years later, but shows that even by then he had not attained an objectivity of approach.

165. Sir Mirza Ismail, *My Public Life*, p. 100.

The book contains mistakes of fact and inference, but as expressing the thoughts and experiences of a Hindu who stayed on in Pakistan and was not friendly to the new country or to its founder, his remarks about the Quaid are of more than ordinary interest. He reveals that it was at the Quaid's instance that a Minorities' Association was established to safeguard the interests of the minorities. Indeed, he gives the gist of a long conversation which the Quaid had with him, and which deserves to be reproduced at some length :

"The long and short of his lecture to me was just this. Now that he had got Pakistan, he had no longer any grudge against the Hindus. In fact, he was anxious to revert to his old and familiar role of 'Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity'. He proposed that he should continue as the champion of minorities in Pakistan as he had been for several years now, the champion of the minorities in India.

"Now, my dear fellow, 'he roared', 'I am going to constitute myself as the Protector-General of the Hindu Minority in Pakistan. I am going to rely on your help. I am going to take no refusal".[166]

There is plenty of evidence not only in Sharma's book but also in the Quaid's public speeches of the period to show that he meant every word of what he said, and did his best to protect the interests of the Hindu minority in Pakistan. When the *Dawn* started publishing what Sharma calls "fearful cartoons of things supposed to have occurred in India" and gave (according to Sharma, wrong) details of the butchery of Muslims, Jinnah encouraged Sharma to give his point of view and "expose the mischief". Even more revealing is his reaction to the riot which was triggered off in Karachi owing to the arrival of a number of Sikhs, in an atmosphere charged with animosities arising out of the reports of Sikh atrocities in East Punjab, and further aggravated by the entry of Indian troops in Kashmir. The Quaid tried to put down the trouble with peremptory orders. Sharma gives some important details of his reaction to this tragedy :

"In fairness to Jinnah I must record that he was the most

166. M.S.M. Sharma, op. cit., pp. 134–35.

shocked individual in Pakistan. He visited the Hindu refugee camps and, at least at one of them, the iron-man lost his nerve and shed a few tears." [167]

The account which Sharma gives of the Quaid shedding tears at a Hindu refugee camp will cause surprise. The Quaid had imposed such an iron discipline on himself and was so averse to a show of sentimental weakness, that very few would consider him capable of "tears". Evidence is, however, available from quite a different source to show that he had a tender heart below a stiff exterior. Altaf Husain, the Editor of *Dawn*, saw things from an angle completely different from that of Sharma, but he also in an article entitled "When Quaid Wept," has recorded an occasion when he saw the Quaid quietly shedding tears over the sufferings of the Muslims in East Punjab. So far as the Quaid's shedding of tears at a Hindu refugee camp is concerned, there is another eye-witness. Jamshed Nusserwanjee, a former mayor of Karachi, told Hector Bolitho :

"I beg you to believe that Mr Jinnah was a humanitarian [*sic*]. He was never generous with tears—oh, no—but I saw him weep, twice. Once was after Partition, in January 1948, when I went with him to see an encampment of Hindus who had stayed on in Pakistan. When he saw their misery, he wept. I saw the tears on his cheek." [168]

The second occasion when Nusserwanjee saw tears in the Quaid's eyes was after his failure at Calcutta in 1928, to which a reference has already been made.

Sharma gives an account of the last meeting of the Council of All-India Muslim League held at Karachi on 15 December 1947, at which, according to him, the Quaid made a "violent effort to convert the Muslim League into a non-communal and national organisation whose membership would be thrown open to all citizens of Pakistan regardless of caste, creed, race or religion." [169] This historic meeting was not open to the public, and it is difficult

167. Ibid., p. 172.
168. Bolitho, op. cit., p. 95.
169. Sharma, op. cit., p. 182.

to categorically confirm[170] the accuracy of Sharma's version of the proceedings, but there is a fair basis for believing that the Quaid was not opposed to the opening, at a suitable time, of the door of the Muslim League to the members of other communities and converting it into a national organisation. The Muslim League Council had decided against the proposal, and after this decision the Quaid naturally explained its provisions, but took care to indicate the possibility of a change in the future. A few days after the meeting of the Council he was interviewed by the representative of the B.B.C. who asked him "whether the Muslim League would eventually transform itself into a national organization open to members of all religious communities". The Quaid-i Azam replied: "The time has not yet come for a national organisation of that kind. Public opinion among the Muslims of Pakistan is not yet ripe for it." He, however, significantly added, after warning against being dazzled by democratic slogans: "But the decision to form a purely Muslim organisation in Pakistan is not

170. Sharma's story appears substantially correct. Apart from the replies to our oral inquiries, we have come across a front-page story in the *Dawn*, Karachi, of 26 April 1947, which must have been inspired. The headlines were "All-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE TO BE WOUND UP. PAKISTAN NATIONAL LEAGUE, OPEN TO ALL, PROPOSED TO REPLACE IT." The item was given as from *Dawn's* Lahore correspondent, but that *might* have been possibly to cover up the true source. It is worth noting in this connection that East Bengal Muslim League leaders, with whom the Editor of *Dawn* was closely associated, were opposed to the proposal. The *Dawn* for 7 December 1947 carried an item headed "*Bengal Muslim League's Strong Protest Against AIML Dissolution*" and contained the report of a meeting of the Working Committee of the Bengal Muslim League urging that "no decision in favour of winding up Muslim League Organization, especially in Eastern Pakistan, will ever be accepted by them". This view prevailed at the League session. The Quaid, as a democrat, accepted the decision but as a statesman he realised that an organisation whose membership was not open to one crore of population could not become fully representative of the nation. While accepting the decision, he, therefore, kept the door open for the future. The Working Committee of the Bengal League had based its opposition on a "study of the psychology of the Muslims of Eastern Pakistan," but the first general election fought in the province—in 1954—showed how feeble was their hold over the province!

irrevocable. It may be altered as and when necessary to suit changing conditions. Nothing is static in politics."[171]

Sharma says that at the Council, the Quaid-i Azam did not have things in his own way. Even otherwise, according to him, the Quaid could not control the anti-Hindu forces in the new state. He says: "Jinnah had greatly overrated his hold on Muslims whom he could goad into lawlessness but he could not restrain them." He, however, leaves no doubt about the Quaid's own views and the efforts which he made to safeguard the interests of the minorities.

For the Quaid-i Azam—or Pakistan—Sharma is not a friendly or even a fair witness. He has some cheap, fanciful gibes as "the Sultan of Kashmir" and says many other unfair, unfriendly things about the Quaid. But this does not detract from—in fact, it adds to—the value of his testimony regarding the humane side of the Quaid's personality which is corroborated, not only by the Quaid's speeches and actions as Governor-General, but also by such evidence as is available. And what a far cry is all this from the popular image of the Quaid-i Azam!

Apparently, Mrs Sarojini Naidu, whose detailed assessment has been reproduced at length by Bolitho[172] and regarded as "the wisest" of all estimates of the Quaid, was not far wrong when she wrote:

"Never was there a nature whose outer qualities provided so complete an antithesis of its inner worth. Tall and stately, but thin to the point of emaciation, languid and luxurious of habit, Mohomed Ali Jinnah's attenuated form is the deceptive sheath of a spirit of exceptional vitality and endurance. Somewhat formal and fastidious, and a little aloof and imperious of manner, the calm hauteur of his accustomed reserve but masks—for those who know him—a naive and eager humanity, an intuition quick and tender as a woman's, a humour gay and winning as a child's. Pre-eminently rational and practical, discreet and dispassionate in his estimate and acceptance of life, the obvious sanity and serenity of his worldly wisdom effectually disguise a shy and splendid idealism which is the very essence of the man."[173]

171. *Dawn*, 20 December 1947.

172. Hector Bolitho, op. cit., pp. 213–14.

173. Ibid., pp. 21–22.

2

The emotional, almost unintelligent, manner in which the majority community reacted to the demand for Pakistan, has not only obscured the personality of the Quaid-i Azam, but also cast a deep shadow on his work as a statesman. The real test of his constructive statesmanship came when he became the Governor-General of Pakistan. Unluckily his tenure was too brief, but he worked during most difficult and crucial times, and his performance even within a limited time can give the measure of the man. Some indication of this has already been given. For a proper assessment of the Quaid's qualities as a statesman, perhaps the best method is a study of the slender volume of his *Speeches as Governor-General of Pakistan, 1947–48*. They are all "occasional pieces" and most of the speeches are brief and businesslike, but they breathe cool wisdom, humanity and liberal, progressive idealism.

The Quaid's place in history will, however, be determined on the basis of his supreme achievement—establishment of Pakistan. Before dealing with the consequences of this momentous step it is useful to point out the circumstances in which the decision in favour of division was taken. Even the time which the Quaid took to make up his mind in favour of Pakistan would show that the decision was not taken lightly. Indeed, the question was too big to be decided easily by any leader of responsibility. Khaliquzzaman has given an account of his talks with the Quaid on 12 May 1939 when he expounded the case for Pakistan. The Quaid's remarks were: "Have you weighed the consequences?" His own reaction was that he was not opposed to it but "it had to be examined in all its bearings".[174] The Aga Khan has recorded his conviction that as late as 1946 the Quaid had not finally determined his goal.[175] Till the middle of the year, i.e. till the Congress took up a strange and disturbing attitude with regard to the Cabinet Mission Plan—theoretically accepting it, but distorting the meaning of its basic provisions—he had not made up his mind. Even

174. Khaliquzzaman, op. cit., p. 211.
175. *The Memoirs of Aga Khan*, p. 296.

as late as 12 May 1946, when the Muslim League officially placed its demands before the Cabinet Mission, it was prepared to entrust certain subjects to the Centre on certain conditions.[176]

Those who were in touch with the Quaid say that it was the Congress behaviour in the middle of 1946 which made him finally clinch the issue. He argued that if, even when the British were in control, the Congress leaders could resort to such "bad faith," what would they not do when they were in full charge of affairs and controlled the army. After the experience of 1946, the Quaid's mind was finally made up. He saw that safety for Muslims and the only way to avoid endless squabbles and conflicts between large Muslim-majority areas and Hindu India lay in a division of the subcontinent. He, now, set about his task not only with his usual singleness of purpose, but also in a new spirit of desperation. For the first time in its history, the Muslim League talked of Direct Action. Besides, the Quaid made it clear that not only was there to be a division but also an immediate division of the armed forces. This, however, was a decision which was forced on him. All his life he had worked for peace, harmony and freedom of India, subject, of course, to the safeguarding of the Muslim position. Sharma says: "Jinnah's highest ambition in life was a hazy notion that he must be hailed as a born deliverer of men from bondage."[177] If his career is studied dispassionately, it would appear that his principal role in political life had been that of lifting the road-blocks from the path of India's constitutional progress. When in the second decade of this century, future progress was likely to be hampered by lack of Hindu-Muslim agreement, he had a hand in drawing up the Lucknow Pact. Fifteen years later when at the Round Table Conference the Muslim

176. Muslim League memorandum has been given by Khaliquzzaman at pp. 352–53 of his book, as also by Ram Gopal (op. cit., p. 309). The latter has expressed keen regret that, although now "difference between the proposals of the League and the Congress was one of degree only," the gesture from the League was not reciprocated. "The League had now to choose between the two alternatives, *i.e.* to have its truncated Pakistan, or to accept the Congress concept of the future constitution of India" (pp. 310–11).

177. Sharma, op. cit., p. 90.

delegates insisted that there should be no further discussion of the constitutional proposals unless their claims were settled in advance, he intervened and successfully urged that proposals for further constitutional progress may be discussed, subject to the proviso that any implementation would be conditional on the settlement of the Muslim claims.

Even the creation of Pakistan was, in reality, the lifting of a road-block. The two other alternatives were civil war or prolongation of the British rule, which was one of the alternatives suggested by Viceroy Wavell. The Secretary of State had asked him about the future possibilities if the Cabinet Mission Plan collapsed and the Congress launched another mass campaign on Quit India lines. Wavell's long memorandum outlining various alternatives has not been published, but he summarised his proposals in his last letter to King George VI, and the relevant entry has been reproduced by the royal biographer. According to this, the first possibility suggested by Wavell was "to make up our minds to re-establish our power and prestige in India, and to rule the country for a further period which must be for at least fifteen years if we were to obtain any effective support whatever within the country".[178] The Labour Government rejected this, but considering that the "King had been genuinely alarmed" even at the concessions contained in the Cripps Proposals of 1942, and after meeting Nehru and the Quaid on 5 December 1946 had sadly recorded in his diary: "We have gone too fast for them," the Labour Government may not have had the last word—especially as, according to Prime Minister Attlee, "at one time it seemed likely that an adverse vote would be cast"[179] [in February 1947] in the House of Lords over his Government's proposal to set a time limit to hand over control in India. It can be safely assumed that if an acceptable formula, fair to major parties, had not been available, the British control over the subcontinent would have been prolonged on the lines suggested by Wavell or there would have been civil war. The Quaid, by successfully advocating a

178. John W. Wheeler-Bennet, op. cit., p. 708.

179. C.R. Attlee, op. cit., p. 215.

course, by which these disastrous possibilities were avoided, smoothed the path for India's freedom.

The Quaid's conflict with the Congress, which was in the vanguard of the struggle for Indian independence, has obscured his own passionate devotion to the cause of India's freedom. Menon, for example, has bemoaned that:

"Jinnah, the hero of my generation, a great nationalist in his time and one who fought many a battle for freedom of his country, should later have fought so successfully against its freedom...."[180]

The last part of the sentence is a cruel misreading of the Quaid's role. He and Mahatma Gandhi differed on the mould in which India's freedom from foreign rule should be cast, but on the basic goal of freedom there was no difference of opinion. Mahatma's slogan was "Quit India," while the Quaid's demand was "Divide and Quit". The common element "Quit" in the two demands is too obvious to need emphasis. It was this emphasis on freedom by the Muslim League which upset old Indian hands like Ismay. In the Interim Government, League and Congress representatives were at loggerheads, but on the demand for India's freedom, they were united. Lord Ismay, while explaining to Hector Bolitho the need for shifting the date of independence of India from June 1948 to August 1947, said:

"There was another reason: the Viceroy's Executive Council, which had been composed of six or eight wise men, had disappeared. We had instead a Cabinet of nine Congress leaders and five Muslim League leaders who could agree on only one thought—that the British should quit India."[181]

One reason for misjudging the Quaid is that the advantages of Pakistan have not been fully realised. It is said, for example, that it has not solved the communal problem. The reference is, presumably, to the communal riots which continue to take place in India. These could easily be controlled if the local administration were keen and alert. Even as it is, the enormous reduction in the size of the communal problem should not be lost sight of. From the point of view of Hindustan also, Pakistan has been a great

180. Menon, op. cit., p. 437. 181. Hector Bolitho, op. cit., p. 181.

blessing. It was not without reason that Vallabhbhai Patel and V.P. Menon, during "a lengthy discussion in December 1946 or early in January 1947," coolly weighed the relative advantages of the Cabinet Mission Plan and the division of India on lines which were later incorporated in the Third June Plan and came to the conclusion that the latter course was better.

So far as the advantages of Pakistan to areas which now constitute Pakistan are concerned, they are too obvious to need any emphasis. Even from the point of view of Hindustan the division has been beneficial, and it may be useful to give a long quotation from the pen of Dr Sachin Sen, a Hindu scholar :

"In undivided India, there would have been Muslim domination in the army and the utmost extension of provincial autonomy. In the Muslim majority areas, Muslim dominance would have been felt, and it would have spread unhealthy reaction in the Hindu majority areas. The spirit of communal exclusiveness would have been on the increase. The disavantages of a weak Centre in the exploitation of economic resources of India had to be accepted. The ideals of one language, one citizenship would have been discouraged. In a partitioned India the army is safe although the frontier is not. Militarily, there is the need for common defence measures and if Pakistan proves hostile and makes the Hindus dominant in the Indian Union, and if the synthesis of Hindu-Islamic culture which was growing in India is arrested, the possibilities of a revival movement in the Indian Union are great. In Pakistan, there is the declared intention of returning to Shariat laws and to the scheme of society proclaimed by the Prophet Muhammad. In divided India the revivalist movement may gain momentum, if there is the lack of vigilance and waning of enlightened, progressive democratic forces. Divided India is more politically and economically integrated. The unification of India with the native States would not have been complete in undivided India. A strong Centre, one language, one citizenship, all these have been possible in a partitioned India."[182]

Subject to the safeguarding of interests of the people who had

182. Sachin Sen, *The Birth of Pakistan*, p. 192. Sen refers to the problems of minorities in the two countries, but if the relations between the two governments were on a statesmanlike basis, the position of the minorities would improve, and they could become a source of strength and a link in promoting Indo-Pakistan co-operation.

put absolute faith in him, the Quaid-i Azam acted with moderation, goodwill and true patriotism. Even when Partition came, he bade farewell to India in a friendly spirit. The message which he gave on 7 August 1947, i.e. at a time when special trains carrying record for the future Pakistan Government to Karachi had been blown up and massacres in the Punjab had commenced, breathes the spirit of goodwill and friendliness. He expressed his hope that "the two Indias are parting as friends for ever". Owing to several factors, this dream has had only a fitful realisation. The two Governments were able to control the criminal forces which were let loose in 1947, and their relations might have improved but for Kashmir. This dispute virtually created a state of undeclared war and all remaining ties had to be rent asunder. Still the Quaid-i Azam remained cool and in spite of growing bitterness and long after the beginning of the Kashmir dispute—but before India's lack of good faith with regard to her pledge for plebiscite in Kashmir had become manifest—he offered Joint Defence and even co-ordination between India and Pakistan "for the purpose of playing their part in international affairs".[183] Prime Minister Nehru's response (as expressed in reply to a question in the Indian Parlianment) was positive, but obviously "Joint Defence" could not come about until—as the Quaid pointed out—"Pakistan and India can resolve their own differences," particulary the Kashmir dispute. These differences have not been resolved with the result that India and Pakistan remain poles apart, and Pakistan has turned to other directions for friendship and security. The fact that those well-meaning Indian leaders who want the two countries to be friendly start talking of a confederation has not helped matters.

Amongst those who have advocated confederation of India and Pakistan was Dr Ram Manohar Lohia who had the reputation of an intellectual. He occasionally made remarks about the need for Indo-Pakistan friendship which pleased some well-meaning optimists. It would, however, be useful to give two quotations from him :

183. For the Quaid's historic statement and Nehru's observations, see Appendix II.

"I wish to advance the theory that friendship between India and Pakistan is an essential condition for their continuing existence, and also that such friendship cannot be commanded to stay within its prescribed limits and must necessarily advance into reunion."[184]

If Dr Lohia is correct in his diagnosis, all loyal citizens of Pakistan must beware of Indo-Pakistan friendship. After what happened in 1947 in the two parts of the Punjab, it would be a crime to think of reunion. Against Dr Lohia's theory it can also be argued that Canada and U.S.A. have been able to have friendly relations and contain this friendship within the limits of two separate, independent states. Unless the Indian leaders can give up all thoughts of reunion and sincerely reconcile themselves to the Partition as voluntarily agreed upon by the Congress, the League and the Sikhs on 3 June 1947, the prospects for any friendship between the two countries are grim indeed.

The other quotation from Dr Lohia's book is even more revealing and, perhaps, even more disconcerting:

"Of special or regional solutions, illustrative mention may be made of the concept of united and sovereign Bengal. When Mr. Sarat Chanda Bose had first dropped this suggestion, I had considered it an extraordinarily foolish idea. It was probably so, then. It may still take a long time to become a practical idea. But I would not today be prepared to refuse to consider the idea. *The population of East Bengal may be tempted to break away from West Pakistan only if West Bengal is similarly tempted to break away from India. Such a breaking away may well prove to be an intermediate stage towards an eventual and larger reunion.*"[185]

So Dr Lohia is prepared to place the doubtful temptation of United Bengal before East Pakistan as "an intermediate stage towards an eventual and larger reunion". (Some of his friends may even be prepared to offer the bait of autonomous East Pakistan "as an intermediate stage"!) Leaders of East Pakistan must be very naive, if they would be "tempted to break away from West Pakistan," after reading such open declaration of plans—especially after having seen the fate of Shaikh Abdullah and realised how

184. Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, *Guilty Men of India's Partition* (1960), p. 53.

185. Ibid., pp. 59–60. Italics ours.

autonomy granted to Kashmir in 1947 is being steadily corroded in spite of the fact that Kashmir dispute is yet before the United Nations and the world takes note of what is happening there. Perhaps, Dr Lohia and others like him may be able to play upon the real or imaginary grievances of East Pakistan and beguile some simple-minded or angry young men, but the way responsible leaders of Muslim Bengal think on this question may be seen from the writings of Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy, whose attitude has been so systematically misrepresented in Pakistan. In the course of a communication addressed to ex-President Ayub Khan, he wrote:

"To even conceive the idea of joining Hindu Bengal or Hindu India is not merely treason to Pakistan, but to the Muslims as a whole. It is nothing but tantamount to offer so many victims for sacrifice. Do you think I cannot see it? I see much more clearly than many the rising tide of militant Hindusim in India which is placing the Muslims of India in grave danger of annihilation. How can anyone who is a Muslim, who loves Muslims, whose greatest anxiety is the safety of the Muslims we have left behind in India, ever think of placing East Pakistan, with its innocent Muslim population, who have loaded me with trust, and I hope, love in the thrall of Hindu India. Or do you mean secession? I never heard of this until after I had returned from my tour abroad, and then only from a statement of yours that there was some such idea somewhere. For me Pakistan is one and indivisible. It is for this that I have struggled and risked and grown old. Both must remain together. East Pakistan stands in the greatest danger of being overwhelmed and destroyed and annexed by police action if it secedes. This is my reaction to any suggestion of secession.

"Again, I say we must stay together and our safety is in co-operation with West Pakistan. If the United States has given us arms, they are meant for Pakistan as a whole. You may not know, Mr. President, but there was a time when some of the leaders of West Pakistan were of the opinion that they should drive out East Pakistan and make it go its own way. Yes, there were public utterances to this effect; and the reason was that they thought that in a Parliament where the representatives of East Pakistan were in a majority on account of the greater population of East Pakistan, they would be overwhelmed. There were occasions when the representatives of West Pakistan walked out of Parliament in anger because their proposals did not find favour with the majority. In order that West Pakistan may not have any sense of grievance arising out of its minority representation, I induced East Pakistan to accept parity. Although

this had been mooted in previous reports, nobody could induce East Pakistan to accept it, and give up a political right cherished in all democratic countries, on which today the principle of self-determination itself is based with all its angularities. I, however, thought that co-operation with West Pakistan was essential for the existence and progress of Pakistan, and that the principle of parity could get rid of the Provincial complex, and we would have common political parties in both wings, instead of forming ourselves into Provincial groups. And I toured East Pakistan (I was Law Minister then) and spoke to the people at countless meetings and induced them to endorse the principle of parity. It was on this principle that the Constituent Assembly was elected for the first time in 1955 (when I was Law Minister). I was called a traitor to East Pakistan, and I was told I was selling East Pakistan to West Pakistan, but I held my ground and won for the sake of integrated Pakistan. And do you think I could have been a party to secession?"[186]

In connection with Lohia's scheme of "an intermediate stage" and Suhrawardy's views, it may be useful to recall what Sir Lovat Fraser wrote about the attitude of East Bengal Hindus towards Muslims in this area. Dealing with situation after the first Partition of Bengal, he wrote :

"I saw in Calcutta Mr. Saroda Charan Mitter, lately a judge of the High Court. 'You tell me,' he said, 'that the high-caste Hindus still dominate the position in Eastern Bengal. I tell you,' he added in rising tone, 'that the high-caste Hindus will dominate Eastern Bengal fifty years hence, aye, a century hence.' "[187]

There is no doubt that—thanks to the progress made since the creation of Pakistan—the position in East Pakistan is not what it was when Saroda Charan Mitter made his remarks, but the quotations we have given from Dr Ram Manohar Lohia's and Sir Lovat

186. We are indebted for this quotation to [late] Mr N.M. Khan who has collected much valuable material for a biography of H.S. Shurawardy.

187. Sir Lovat Fraser, *India Under Curzon and After*, p. 384. Fraser also dealt with the question of common Bengali nationhood at p. 385 of his book. He said : "The 'Bengali nation' argument was, however, never worth considering; the province of Bengal, as we have known it, was entirely the creation of the British; the very language in which Bengalis clothe their thoughts was created under the stimulus of British influence and modern Bengali prose is scarcely forty years old" (p. 388).

Fraser's books would show how dangerous the position is and the long extract from Suhrawardy's communication to ex-President Ayub would show that responsible leaders of East Pakistan realise it. In these circumstances it is totally unrealistic to talk of confederation between India and Pakistan. The possibility of a confederation was knocked on the head when Patel and Menon decided against the Cabinet Mission Plan and the Congress asked for a division of the Punjab and Bengal. Now the only possibility —in favourable times—is what the Quaid called "some sort of a treaty" between two sovereign states, which, in view of the geography and history of Pakistan and India, may cover all mutually beneficial arrangements while preserving the sovereign independence of both. Indo-Pak amity will not be achieved unless India is really keen about it, has a better understanding of Pakistan's sources of strength, and can keep in check the urge to "get seventeen annas for the rupee". Even then bold and resourceful leadership will be needed in both countries, to reduce bitterness, prejudices and unconscious hostility, and to deal with negative forces. At present,[188] chances of an understanding are meagre and have been further reduced by Nehru's death just when, following the Chinese invasion of India, he was beginning to realise the perils of the traditional Indian attitude towards Pakistan, but if some day the forces of statesmanship gain the upper hand, the Quaid's approach to the question will provide a realistic—and adequate —basis.

188. Written in June 1965.

Chapter 15

LIAQAT ALI KHAN
(1896-1951)

NAWABZADAH Liaqat Ali Khan was born in 1896 in Karnal District of East Punjab. He was the second son of a wealthy land-owning family, which came from Iran about five hundred years ago, and claims descent from the famous Iranian king, Anushirvan, the Just. The family owned landed estate in the Punjab and United Provinces, and young Liaqat spent his formative years in U.P., which was at that time the home of Muslim culture. He graduated in 1918 from Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College of Aligarh, and left a year later for higher studies in England. He joined Exeter College at Oxford and also kept terms for the Bar. He took his degree in Law in 1921 and was called to the Bar at the Inner Temple in 1922. During his stay at Oxford, Liaqat Ali Khan took active part in political debates for which the Indian Majlis at Oxford has always been known and was the treasurer of that organisation for some time.

No proper study of Liaqat Ali Khan, particularly relating to the period preceding his appointment as Finance Minister in the Government of India, has been made and one turns with gratitude to such information as is incidentally available in the accounts of others. He seems to have had a sociable personality, with a large number of friends in all communities. K.S.P. Menon, who became Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth Relations in India, was his contemporary at Oxford, and calls him "a good sportsman and a good friend". Elsewhere Menon says in his autobiography about his residence in Delhi :

"A frequent visitor to our home at this time was Liaquat Ali Khan, who was destined to become the first Prime Minister

of Pakistan. After our parting at Oxford we had met seldom. Now both of us had acquired wives, and they too struck up a friendship. . . . Liaquat was already a rising star in the Muslim League, but that did not interfere with our friendship."[1]

Nawab Ahmad Saeed Khan of Chhatari has also a few informative paragraphs regarding Liaqat in his autobiography. Chhatari visited Karnal on 12 February 1929, and was a guest of Nawabzadah Liaqat Ali Khan. He writes that in those days Liaqat had a large Zamindari in the districts of Karnal and Muzaffarnagar. He was a member of the [U.P.] Legislative Council, of which he became Deputy President. Chhatari praises Liaqat's sound common sense, strong sense of self-respect and generous hospitality, and continues to say:

"He had a separate group in the Council, but often supported me. In those days he was opposed to Separate Electorates, etc. He delivered a well-argued speech in support of Joint Electorates, while speaking in the Legislative Council on the question of elections to the Town Committees. In the course of his speech he said: 'Interests of no minority can be truly safeguarded through Separate Electorates. In my opinion they are harmful for a minority. In Separate Electorates everybody is interested only in his own group. The Hindu stands for the Hindus, the Muslim for the Muslims, the Christian for the Christians and the Sikh for the Sikhs.' "[2]

After his return to India, Liaqat Ali Khan settled down at Muzaffarnagar in U.P. In 1926, he was elected to the U.P. Legislative Council where he sat for fourteen years, six of them as Deputy President and leader of the Democratic Party.

In 1923, he joined the All-India Muslim League and attended its annual session at Lahore in May 1924. When, in 1927, the League split into two groups—one led by M.A. Jinnah and the other by Sir Muhammad Shafi—on the question of the co-operation with the Simon Commission, Liaqat sided with the group headed by Jinnah. He was a member of the Muslim League delegation which attended the National Convention held at Calcutta to discuss the Nehru Report in December 1928.

1. K.S.P. Menon, *Many Worlds*, p. 137.
2. Chhatari, *Yad-i Ayyam*, p. 262.

Like the leader of his group, Liaqat fervently believed in Hindu-Muslim unity and worked for it. In his presidential address delivered at the Provincial Muslim Educational Conference in 1932 he expressed the view that the Muslims had "distinct culture of their own" and had the right to preserve it. "But," he also added, "days of rabid communalism in this country are numbered and we shall witness ere long the united Hindu-Muslim India anxious to preserve and maintain all that rich and valuable heritage which the contact of the two great cultures has bequeathed us. We all believe in the great destiny of our common motherland to achieve which common assets are but invaluable."[3]

In 1933, he married again. His second wife was a well-known educationist and was originally a Christian. The couple went to Europe in the same year. The Nawabzadah maintained his connections with the Muslim League, but at that time the League did not have a Parliamentary wing. The Nawabzadah, who had organised a Democratic Party in U.P., made a close study of the organisation of the political parties in England. On 26 April 1936, he was elected Honorary Secretary of the All-India Muslim League in place of Sir Muhammad Yaqub in its Bombay Session and held this office, with a brief gap, right up to the time when the All-India Muslim League was wound up after the establishment of Pakistan. There is some confusion about Liaqat's position from July 1936 to early 1938, and the safest course seems to be to quote from Mr Rafique Afzal's introduction to the *Speeches and Statements of Quaid-i-Millat Liaquat Ali Khan*—1941–51.

"He resigned from the Muslim League Parliamentary Board in July 1936 due to differences with the provincial members of the Board and because the parliamentary leaders dominating the Board were, in the words of Liaquat, 'regarded with suspicion by the majority of Muslims as having a veiled kinship with the Congress'. Liaquat joined the newly organised National Agriculturist Party of Nawab of Chhattari. He, however, did not contest the 1937 elections on any party's ticket. . . . Liaquat Ali Khan was

3. Quoted in M. Rafique Afzal, Introduction to *Speeches and Statements of Quaid-i-Millat Liaquat Ali Khan* (1941–51), p. v.

again elected as Honorary Secretary of the Muslim League in 1938."[4]

In 1940, Liaqat Ali Khan was elected to the Central Legislative Assembly, where he immediately became the Deputy Leader of the Muslim League party under the leadership of the Quaid-i Azam. Perhaps even more important was his election as Secretary of the All-India Muslim League, which office he occupied for the first time in 1937. Being by nature more suited to quiet, constructive work and shunning limelight, his great qualities were not known to many but the great Quaid who had seen him closely at work knew his worth and described him as his "right hand" in a public speech on his re-election as Honorary Secretary of the All-India Muslim League at the Karachi session on 26 December 1943. "In putting the proposition to vote Mr. M.A. Jinnah described Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan as 'my right hand'. He, the Nawabzada, had 'worked and served' day and night, and none could possibly have an idea of the great burden he shouldered. Nawabzadah Liaquat Ali Khan, Mr. Jinnah continued, commanded the universal respect and confidence of the Musalmans. Though a Nawabzada, he was a thorough proletarian, and he hoped other Nawabs in the country would follow his example. Mr. Jinnah paid a tribute to the General Secretary for the services he had rendered to the League during the last seven years and wished him a long life of service to the community."[5]

The great opportunity of Liaqat Ali Khan's life came in 1946, when he was appointed to the Viceroy's Executive Council and became Finance Member in the Indian Interim Government, which preceded the Partition. This was an office which called for solid, constructive work rather than the histrionic exuberance of the average Indian politician, and here Liaqat was in his element. After twenty years of parliamentary experience in Lucknow and Delhi, he was of course a master of the parliamentarian technique,

4. Ibid., p. vi.

5. Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, Ed., *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, I, 574.

effective in speeches and quick in repartees. With his dignity and courtesy of the old Muslim aristocracy, he was bound to be popular with all sections of Indian society, but what surprised everybody was his great success as Member in charge of a portfolio which was not supposed to be the special domain either of Muslims or of old aristocracy. He not only quickly mastered the routine of work in the Finance Department but introduced changes which were noteworthy for their soundness, originality and benefits to the under-dog. His memorable budget which made "many a multimillionaire turn grey overnight" extorted grudging approval even from the Congress opponents and was widely acclaimed as "a poor man's budget". Some people in Bombay and Ahmedabad thought that the budget was dictated by political motives, but this was not so. In spite of his high birth and the general style of his living, those who knew the Nawabzadah intimately say that he had a marked streak of "the other-worldliness" and his love for the under-dog was deep and sincere. Presumably, the Quaid was referring to this when he said that "though a Nawabzada, he was a thorough proletarian," and it was this love which was responsible for his "poor man's budget".

Liaqat Ali Khan was the leader of the Muslim League party in the Indian Interim Government and his appointment as Premier of Pakistan followed almost automatically. This meant a great increase in his responsibilities and opportunities. Of course, so long as the Quaid was alive, the ultimate responsibility for matters of highest national importance continued to be his, but the Prime Minister was responsible for carrying out all decisions and in most cases for taking them with the help of his Cabinet. After the Quaid's death, Liaqat's responsibilities increased a hundredfold. Although there was no change in his office, he became, by common consent, the Quaid's successor. He was the Quaid's chief lieutenant during his lifetime and so he stepped into his shoes after his death, but it was not an easy task to fill the void created by the death of the father of the nation. The Quaid had led the people to their goal and had, therefore, all those advantages which national heroes can command. Liaqat took over Quaid's responsibilities without the advantages which the

Quaid had. He had to work hard to display all his qualities of leadership, sound judgment and constructive statesmanship before he could earn the confidence of the people. Outside Pakistan the number of those who doubted his—and in fact any Pakistani's—ability to fill the void left by the Quaid was much larger. As a matter of fact, many newspapers in England and America openly stated that with the builder's death "the house that Jinnah built" would collapse. The fact that the Quaid's death coincided with the downfall of Hyderabad greatly added to the prevailing gloom and increased Liaqat's difficulties. The way he mastered these difficulties and discharged his onerous responsibilities could be seen by reference to the pages of the same foreign newspapers. A leftist critic, while comparing Liaqat Ali Khan with Pandit Nehru and the Quaid-i Azam said that "although he lacks their public appeal, his abilities as an administrator and political boss are superior to either of them". *The Manchester Guardian* in a leading article summed up the position by saying about Nawab Liaqat Ali Khan, " . . . for nearly three years he has been building up his present commanding position. Courage, humanity, practical idealism, and skill in handling his political colleagues are the qualities which equipped him for his task in Pakistan. His patient work is now beginning to earn recognition from the world. He is passing from the status of a national statesman to an international one. He belongs to the small group of world figures by whom international destinies are decided. *The best testimony to him is the condition of Pakistan today*" [italics ours].

Not only was Pakistan able to adjust herself to the death of the Quaid without any political or administrative dislocation, but under the wise statesmanship of his successor, Pakistan maintained a continuous record of progress and consolidation. Her economic strength was put to a severe test when after the devaluation of the pound, almost all countries in the sterling area devalued their currencies and only Pakistan stood out. Very few outside Pakistan thought that she would be able to maintain this attitude for long. It was felt that economic forces would prove too strong, and she would have to reconsider her decision. India, on which Pakistan depended for supply of coal and other necessities, and

for sale of her major commercial crops like jute and cotton, was so put out by Pakistan's decision that she refused to recognise the new exchange rate of Pakistani rupee and a trade war started between the two dominions. India with her vast economic resources and ability to hold on was sure of victory. She allowed her mills at Ahmedabad and Calcutta to be closed and thousands of labourers kept out of work for want of cotton and jute rather than purchase these commodities from Pakistan. She refused to supply coal, without which, it was thought, Pakistan's communications would be halted. This economic war lasted for more than a year, and of course involved great efforts and sacrifices on the part of Pakistan. It was not only a struggle against a powerful neighbour. Behind India were ranged, in the distant background, the forces of other countries of the sterling area, which were adversely affected by Pakistan's decision. For a good while not only the jute magnates of Calcutta but also of Dundee kept off the East Bengal market. Indian newspapers freely talked of "Dundee-Calcutta Axis". But Pakistan proved equal to the task. She found new markets for her produce and was similarly able to purchase elsewhere the coal and other stuff for which she depended on India. Ultimately, on 25 January 1951, India had to accept the par value of Pakistani rupee, and the seventeen-month-old trade deadlock was resolved. If Pakistan attained political independence in 1947, it attained full commercial independence three and a half years later and though the two countries, in their mutual interest, resumed a well-regulated trade, Pakistan emerged stronger and economically more independent on account of the "cold war". The problems arising out of the economic war with India were tackled by the Ministry of Commerce—particularly the Jute Board—and the Ministry of Finance, but the Prime Minister, who had overall responsibility for major national policies, must share with them the credit for economic consolidation of Pakistan.

Same sturdy independence was displayed in the sphere of foreign relations. Since the day of Syed Ahmad Khan, the relations between Indian Muslims and British officers in India have been usually smooth and marked by understanding and goodwill. A large majority of Indian soldiers, who bled for the Empire

in the two World Wars, consisted of Muslims from the areas which are now a part of Pakistan. These relations, however, became severely strained on account of the policy followed by the Labour Government during the last stages of British connection with India. There was intense and widespread bitterness against the part played by Lord Mountbatten, Sir Evan Jenkins and Sir Cyril Radcliff in "the final phase," but Pakistani authorities kept their heads cool. Not only their attitude towards British Commonwealth was less equivocal than that of India, but they employed a large number of British officers in positions of trust and power. It, however, became obvious that this policy was not being properly appreciated in London. It was being attributed, it was felt, to Pakistan's weaknesses rather than to a desire to maintain a policy, which had been of advantage not only to Muslim India but to Great Britain. It was left to Liaqat Ali Khan to dispel these illusions. While in London in April 1949, in connection with a Commonwealth Conference, he met the representatives of the press, and gave a warning that Pakistan "could not be taken for granted". On his way home he received and accepted an invitation to visit Moscow as the guest of U.S.S.R. Government. This visit did not materialise, but it underlined the fact that Pakistan was not to be "taken for granted".

In the field of Indo-Pakistan relations Liaqat Ali Khan's personal contribution was even more striking. Bharat and Pakistan came into existence as a result of a scheme which was accepted and publicly endorsed by the representatives of the two organisations, controlling the Governments in the two countries—the Congress and the League. To secure the concurrence of the Congress to its scheme of Pakistan, the League made a huge sacrifice—by accepting the proposals to partition Muslim-majority provinces of Bengal and Punjab. Not only was the general scheme of Partition mutually agreed—and basically fair—but the interests of the two countries require that they should work in close harmony. But a major operation like the partitioning of a subcontinent must leave "loose ends" which can be tied up only in an atmosphere of goodwill, understanding and constructive statesmanship. Unluckily, owing to the events before and after

the Partition this atmosphere has usually been lacking. Relations between India and Pakistan have been generally bad, and often they have been on the brink of war. Situation was particularly grim in the spring of 1950, when India had lined up her mechanised brigade and other troops on the borders of East Pakistan and the war-polls conducted by the newspapers in Bombay and Calcutta showed a vast majority of readers in favour of war with Pakistan. These were the conditions when Liaqat Ali Khan agreed to pay his first visit to New Delhi since the Partition to discuss things with the Prime Minister of India. Not a few in Karachi were critical of this decision. Newspapers made veiled and unveiled references to the treatment meted out by India to her liberator—Mahatma Gandhi. But Liaqat Ali Khan carried out his peace mission boldly, and Nehru-Liaqat Pact was signed, under which the war between the two countries was averted and a vigorous positive effort was made to improve the situation.

The significance of Liaqat's contribution at this juncture can be realised from the fact that not only was he able to come to terms with Prime Minister Nehru but impressed Sardar Patel with his "earnestness and visible sincerity". At that time opinion in the Indian Cabinet was sharply divided over the desirability of coming to a settlement with Pakistan. Two ministers—Shyamaprasad Mukerjee and K.C. Neogy—resigned in protest against Nehru-Liaqat Pact. Patel, also, was of two minds, but Liaqat was able to persuade him to make this effort to bring the two countries closer. In a broadcast from Calcutta on 21 April 1950, Patel said:

"I also know that my West Bengal friends are definitely worried about the concept of an Islamic State and the consequences which, in the light of history, such a concept is taken to entail. In the face of a clear acceptance of fundamental principles of democracy by the Prime Minister of Pakistan we have no alternative but to mark time and to put it to the test. The one thing that made a profound impression on me in accepting Prime Minister's assurances at their face value was the earnestness and visible sincerity with which he laid stress on the need of bringing the two countries closer in our lifetime. We have at least the background of previous associations and of past friendship

and goodwill; the new generation will grow under the full belief and faith in absolute separation." [6]

With regard to Nehru-Liaqat Pact, N.V. Gadgil who was a minister in Nehru's cabinet, but belonged to Patel's party, has made some important revelations. In his account of his experiences as a minister of Government of India, Gadgil says that originally Nehru-Liaqat Pact contained two paragraphs accepting the "principle of reservation for Muslims in proportion to their population in all the services and representative bodies in the constituent states of India. Similar provisions were suggested for the Central Government also". [7]

The present writer, who was one of the officials attached to the Pakistan Delegation at the time of Nehru-Liaqat Pact, knows it to be a fact that provisions for similar safeguards for the Hindus in East Pakistan, etc., also had been made. Gadgil does not bring this out, but points out that when the draft agreement was brought before the Indian Cabinet, he strongly objected to the relevant paragraphs and said: "These two paragraphs must go lock, stock and barrel. . . ." [8] Nehru pointed out that he had already "agreed to this with Liaquat Ali Khan". [9] Gadgil was, in due course, supported by Patel and the relevant paragraphs were dropped. Curiously enough, Gadgil has based his opposition to safeguards for minorities on the basis of secularism! He told Patel: "We have decided upon a secular Government. This agreement destroys this conception" [10]—as if secularism is opposed to ensuring for the minorities their due share in administration and political life! The incident is another illustration of the manner in which efforts of the Government of Pakistan—and non-communal Hindus—to obtain a fair deal for minorities were thwarted. Gadgil makes no secret of the fact that he was opposed to the very principles of the Liaqat-Nehru Pact and there were others in the Indian Cabinet—like Shyamaprasad Mukerjee—who shared his views. He says: "Pakistan was encouraged in its

6. *The Statesman*, 23 April 1950.
7. N.V. Gadgil, *Government From Inside*, p. 68.
8. Ibid., p. 87.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.

policies by this Pact. Communal Muslims in India get a strong shot in the arm because of it. I felt at the time that it was injurious to the security of the country and I still feel so."[11] With people in key positions in India holding these views, it is hardly a matter for surprise that the efforts of Nehru and Liaqat had only temporary and limited results.

Nehru-Liaqat Pact did not bring out all the results that were expected. They were, indeed, impossible of achievement without India's sincerity in carrying out her commitments regarding Kashmir, but an ugly situation in both countries was avoided. In internal matters, Liaqat Ali Khan followed an equally sound policy. Under his guidance every effort was made to run the administration on sound, healthy and progressive lines. There is not a small danger of an atmosphere of "palace" or "court" intrigues developing round seats of authority in Eastern countries. Adventurers are not lacking amongst politicians—and even civil servants!—who for short-sighted gain might encourage the development of such an atmosphere. Pakistan has, of course, been lucky in this as the Quaid-i Azam set up very high traditions. He was all-powerful in the state which he brought into existence but he exercised his power in a constitutional, well-regulated and conscientious manner, worthy of the most progressive and advanced countries. Liaqat Ali Khan maintained the high traditions he inherited from the Quaid. There was nobody who was more anxious to uphold the independence and prestige of the Pakistan Public Service Commission than the Prime Minister and his actions were directed towards seeing that Government should be run on well-recognised and sound principles rather than according to the personal idiosyncrasy of any Minister or himself.

The Quaid was very keen to raise the standard of political life in Pakistan. He had no hesitation in dismissing an all-powerful provincial Premier because allegations of maladministration and nepotism were received against him. One of the measures which he brought on the Statute Book within the first year of the inception of Pakistan was the Anti-Corruption Act and he took immediate steps to set up a machinery for enforcing the Act.

11. Ibid., p. 88.

Liaqat Ali Khan more than maintained Quaid's policy in this respect. At least, in the beginning, his position was not as strong as that of the Quaid in dealing with powerful politicians, who allowed serious abuses to creep into their administration. As a matter of fact, in the opinion of some shrewd observers, he did himself some damage and made powerful enemies for himself when he insisted on the Quaid's policy being followed with regard to certain politicians in the Punjab and Bengal. But it is is greatly to his credit that he ignored these considerations and did his best to build up a healthy and clean political life in Pakistan.

One of the major problems with which Liaqat Ali Khan had to deal soon after the Quaid's death related to the adjustment of modernist and traditional viewpoints about the future of Pakistan. This is a problem with which all Muslim states have had to deal and their solutions have differed widely—from secularism of Turkey to extreme traditionalism of Saudi Arabia. In Pakistan, the problem assumed a sharp political shape on account of the activities of Maulana Maududi and Jamaat-i Islami. Maulana Maududi, who was at one time the editor of *Al-Jamiat*, is a brilliant writer on religious subjects. Some years before the Partition he settled down at Pathankot in East Punjab, and started urging the establishment of *Hakumat-i Ilahiyah* in the pages of his *Tarjuman-ul-Quran*. He took no part in the struggle for Pakistan and in fact he and his companions were generally critical of the Muslim League leadership. Massacres of East Punjab, however, forced him and his companions to seek asylum in Pakistan and he established his headquarters at Lahore. Here, he and his organisation started a campaign for replacement of the Pakistan Penal Code and other statutes in operation during the British period by Islamic Law and acceptance of the view that the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan or Muslim legislature had no right to frame any constitution or initiate any laws which were not provided for in the Quran, as interpreted by qualified *ulama*. He made the following four-fold demand from the Pakistan Constituent Assembly in an interview which he gave to a representative of the *Dawn* on 6 April 1948 :

"(1) Acknowledgment of the soverignty of God (as against

the sovereignty of the people in demoracy) ;

"(2) acceptance of the Shariat as the basis of the constitution ;

"(3) amendment of anti-Islamic laws and an assurance that no law contrary to the Shariat will be enacted ; and

"(4) the Pakistan Government to exercise its power within the limits of the Shariat."

In dealing with Maulana Maududi the Government of Pakistan—a League Government—did not allow itself to be influenced by his past attitude towards the Muslim League. In fact, shortly after Partition, Jamaat-i Islami offered their assistance in looking after certain refugee camps and the Punjab Government gladly accepted this offer of co-operation. The Maulana was more than welcome at Radio Pakistan—a State-controlled organisation—and he broadcast a number of talks from Lahore Radio Station.

Soon, however, it appeared that the extremism of the Maulana would involve him in a conflict with the Government. He, for example, advised Government servants against signing a pledge demanded by the West Punjab Government, until that Government became Islamic. He also expressed the view that fighting in Kashmir, where a large number of Pathans had gone to the rescue of their Muslim brethren, was not *Jihad*, as Pakistan had treaties with India. This view was severely criticised in the press and action was taken, by the West Punjab Government, to detain the Maulana ender Punjab Public Safety Act in October 1948. Shortly thereafter, the question of enunciating the principles under which Pakistan's constitution should be framed came before the Constituent Assembly, and Liaqat Ali Khan made it clear that, though his Government did not share Maulana Maududi's views about the future of Pakistan, they were determined to give the people the constitution wanted by them. On 7 March 1949, Liaqat Ali Khan brought before the Constituent Assembly what has been known as the Objectives Resolution and delivered a long speech in explaining its provisions. In the course of the discussions that followed, the Leader of the Congress Party in the Assembly stated that he had consulted "some

Lahore Ulama"[12] and had been informed that a non-Muslim could not hold an office of importance in an Islamic State. Liaqat Ali Khan corrected him and stated that this would not apply to the state which they were envisaging and issued a warning, on the floor of the house, to those Lahore *ulama* who were misleading the public.

The full text of the Objectives Resolution was as follows :

"Whereas sovereignty over the entire Universe belongs to Allah Almighty alone, and the authority which He has delegated to the State of Pakistan through its people for being exercised within the limits prescribed by Him is a sacred trust ;

"This Constituent Assembly representing the people of Pakistan resolves to frame a constitution for the sovereign independent State of Pakistan ;

"Wherein the State shall excercise its powers and authority through the chosen representatives of the people ;

"Wherein the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice as enunciated by Islam shall be fully observed ;

"Wherein the Muslims shall be enabled to order their lives in the individual and collective spheres in accord with the teaching and requirements of Islam as set out in the Holy Ouran and the Sunna ;

"Wherein adequate provision shall be made for the minorities freely to profess and practise their religions and develop their cultures ;

"Whereby the territories now included in or in accession with Pakistan and such other territories as may hereafter be included in or accede to Pakistan shall form a Federation wherein the units will be autonomous with such boundaries and limitations on their powers and authority as may be prescribed ;

"Wherein shall be guaranteed fundamental rights including equality of status, of opportunity before law, social, economic and political justice, and freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship and association, subject to law and public morality ;

"Wherein adequate provision shall be made to safeguard the legitimate interests of minorities and backward and depressed

12. The statement was universally taken to refer to *ulama* of Jamaat-i Islami and this has not been contradicted either by the speaker or by the Jamaat.

classes ;

"Wherein the independence of the judiciary shall be fully secured ;

"Wherein the integrity of the territories of the Federation, its independence and all its rights including its sovereign rights on land, see and air shall be safeguarded ;

"So that the people of Pakistan may prosper and attain their rightful and honoured place amongst the nations of the world and make their full contribution towards international peace and progress and happiness of humanity."

The Objectives Resolution is a brief document, but its significance is realised if its background and the acute controversies it successfully resolved are taken into consideration. The basic stand of the Jamaat-i Islami which had carried on most active propaganda in favour of an Islamic State, but (curiously or characteristically?) had not joined the struggle for the establishment of Pakistan, was that sovereignty (including the law-making power) belongs to God alone and the legislature (or rather, the *ulama*) can only interpret what have been revealed as Divine Ordinances. This would have left no law-making power with the legislature, and completely diluted its authority. The Objectives Resolution attempted to reconcile the conflicting viewpoints by affirming that the "sovereignty over the entire Universe belongs to Allah Almighty alone" but followed it up by referring to "the sovereign independent State of Pakistan" and stipulated that the authority "within the limits prescribed by Him" was to be exercised by the people of Pakistan. Limitations on the power of legislature were few. They related to the future alone, and excluded only those laws which were definitely "repugnant to the Quran and Sunna". This left a vast field, in fact the main field, of modern legislative activity, to be operated in accordance with the traditions and requirements of the Muslim community and according to sound, healthy principles of Islamic law, under the sovereign authority of the legislature.

One demand of the Jamaat-i Islami was that Pakistan should formally declare itself to be an Islamic State. The Objectives Resolution did not provide for this, but the only clause added in 1956 to the Objectives Resolution of 1949 and retained in the

Preamble to the Constitution of 1962, laid down that "Pakistan would be a democratic State based on Islamic principles of social justice". This, also, is something different from the theocratic state, which is the basic goal of the Jamaat.

The other important demand on behalf of the group advocating an Islamic State was that the Muslims of Pakistan should be *compelled* to live in accordance with the teachings of the Quran and the Sunnah. The relevant provision in the Objectives Resolution was that the "Muslims of Pakistan should be enabled individually and collectively to order their lives in accordance with the teachings of Islam as set out in the Holy Quran and the Sunna". The significance of the omission of an expression incorporating the idea of "compulsion" and selection of the word "enabled" can be realised, if it is recalled that Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, the acknowledged leader of the Muslim theologians, was a member of the Sub-Committee which drafted the Objectives Resolution, and co-piloted it along with the Prime Minister, in the Constituent Assembly. The entire approach of the Objectives Resolution was that while Pakistan should be a progressive, modern state and not a theocratic, medieval government like the former Saudi Arabia or Yemen, yet every attempt should be made to translate the people's dream of an Islamic social order into action. The Constitution of 1956 and following it the Constitution of 1962 maintained the same approach. The idea of "compulsion" in the fields normally left out of the purview of a modern state was not incorporated but elaborate provision was made through directive principles, not only for "enabling" the people to order their lives in accordance with the Quran and the Sunnah, but also for their Islamic education and for propagation of Islamic values.

At least, some Western scholars have grasped the historic importance of the Objectives Resolution. For example, Professor von Grunebaum, after reproducing the Resolution *in extenso* (and referring to some provisions of the Constitution of Pakistan) remarks:

"It would seem to me that on the theoretical level at least, as good an integration of traditional and Western ideas has been

reached in this document as one might reasonably expect,"[13] and later he adds that

"the attempted bridging of the gap between the Muslim tradition and the Western-inspired idea of the nation-state deserves the greatest attention."[14]

If the balanced and comprehensive approach to the ideological problem which Liaqat Ali Khan had been advocating succeeds and can be worked out in detail by scholars and thinkers, he would have rendered a great service not only to Pakistan but to many other Muslim countries which are faced with the same problem. Of course, this is not going to be easy. If it is to be achieved, Pakistan will have to produce another Iqbal—or at least somebody who, working on the foundations already laid by Shah Waliullah and Iqbal, can attempt a new synthesis. This may or may not be possible in the near future, but at any rate Liaqat Ali Khan deserves credit for having maintained a sane and balanced stand—in spite of criticism from those who do not fully realise the implications of Maulana Maududi's original viewpoint.

Liaqat Ali Khan was, by all accounts, a great success as a Prime Minister, but two important factors which contributed to this deserve to be mentioned. One is the spirit and the quality displayed by the average Pakistani. Of course, the leaders and the Government have helped, but the real explanation of Pakistan's ability to deal successfully with her heart-breaking problems lay in the tenacity, fanatical devotion and self-sacrifice of the man in the street. Nobody was more conscious of this than Liaqat. While addressing the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, during his tour of the United States, he stated frankly:

"What enabled Pakistan to tide over the post-Partition problems was neither experience nor skill—for we possessed little of either—but the sheer determination of the people and their intense patriotism. This continues to be our greatest asset and is a very steadying factor in an uncertain part of the world."

13. G.E. von Grunebaum, *Modern Islam*, p. 230.
14. Ibid.

The second important factor is the ability and patriotism displayed by some Government servants. When Pakistan came into being, the number of senior, trained and experienced Muslims in the services was very small. To some extent the gap was filled by employment of foreign personnel, but the brunt has been borne by the Pakistani officers. This was possible only because several amongst them did the work of two or three men and sacrificed all social pleasures, comforts and amenities to give Pakistan a chance. Of course, this was not true of all or perhaps even majority of Goverment servants, but the proportion of such officers had been substantial enough to enable Pakistan to tide over her initial handicaps. This aspect of the new state has been duly noticed by foreign observers. After a visit to Karachi, in 1949, A.D. Mani, Editor, *Hitavada*, wrote that in Pakistan "the devotion of the services to the welfare of the State, as they conceive it, is far more pronounced" than in India. "The services in Pakistan, by and large, are prepared to undergo any sacrifice, for the maintenance of the stability of the Pakistan State."[15]

The tradition of criticising bureaucracy is so deep-rooted in this subcontinent that it is difficult for the civil servants to expect bouquets from their own press, but the role of services in making a success of "a mutilated" Pakistan has been so distinguished that even the press in Pakistan cannot ignore it. In a leading article *Morning News* of Dacca in its issue for 13 May 1950 wrote:

"There is general public acknowledgment of the fact that since partition quite a number of the officers of the Pakistan Administrative and Police Service in East Pakistan have risen to unattainable heights in discharging loyally and efficiently their duties by the State and the people."

Pakistan has been well served by her officers, but can Liaqat Ali Khan not claim some credit for making a suitable selection of key-men? When the Quaid-i Azam died and Liaqat stepped into his shoes, *The Observer* of London wrote about him:

". . . But most valuable to him [Liaqat Ali Khan] now is the experience he gained through 21 years of administration, with

15. *Free Press Journal*, Bombay, 19 September 1949.

the *insight into character and the practice in choosing men* that this gave him."

Under Liaqat's leadership, Pakistan was able to belie the forebodings of those who thought that with Jinnah's death "the house that Jinnah built" would collapse. He consolidated the foundations and began to build up the new edifice. With his charm, intelligence and good sense he impressed all those who came in contact with him and was able to raise the prestige of the country. In March 1950, he toured U.S.A. at the invitation of the government and favourably impressed those he met. Internationally, he was thought a worthy successor of the Quaid-i Azam. It would, however, be idle to pretend that he possessed the Quaid's authority. He maintained his position more as an arbitrator than as a leader, and met with one or two serious reverses. His dismissal of Mamdot Government displeased many who had faced and brought to knees the Unionist regime in 1947. The Governor-General Khwajah Nazim-ud-Din condemned the Punjab Government in strong language, echoing the thoughts and style of Sir Francis Mudie. The fact that Khan of Mamdot was ultimately found "not guilty" of the charges against him under PRODA, strengthened the feeling that he had not received a fair deal, and even Liaqat found it necessary to curb the autocracy of the British Governor. He suggested the appointment of Advisers, in the absence of a Council of Ministers, and considering that after the resignation of the Congress ministers in 1939, even the British authorities had appointed Advisers to assist the provincial Governors, the step proposed by Liaqat was fully justified. Mudie, however, resisted and Liaqat allowed him to resign and leave.

The decision of Liaqat's Government to accept the cease-fire in Kashmir as from 1 January 1949 has also been criticised. Maj.-General Fazal Muqeem Khan in his book *The Story of the Pakistan Army* refers to "the army's horror" at the timing of the decision. He has pointed out in the Preface that the "views expressed and comments made" in his book are entirely his own, but there seems little doubt that this feeling was widespread. A fair judgment on this question cannot be passed till all relevant

data are available and all considerations underlying this fateful decision are known—and after Liaqat's death that may not be possible. It is certain that the announcement of the cease-fire was a source of keen disappointment to those heroic and resourceful army officers and personnel who had secured notable success and were on the eve of further victories in the area, but according to the information available Liaqat had to keep the overall picture in view. Apparently, he had been given to understand that if the Pakistani thrust continued, India would carry the war into the neighbouring plains which had been substantially denuded of troops to support the effort in Kashmir. The correct assessment of the situation can now only be a matter of speculation, but after the events of September 1965 it is difficult to hold that Liaqat's decision in December 1948 was necessarily wrong and not an act of a statesman and a true patriot.

A development which must have caused Liaqat great personal disappointment and which led to delay in the country's progress on the constitutional road was the successful resistance to the Interim Report of the Basic Principles Committee which he submitted to the Constituent Assembly in September 1950. There was such widespread opposition to these proposals that they had to be withdrawn. This was the low ebb of Liaqat's political career, but there is no doubt that he would have, in course of time, found a solution. Unluckily he was not spared long for the purpose; on 16 October 1951, he fell a martyr to the bullet of an assassin. His death was a staggering blow to Pakistan, and the ship of the new state entered troubled waters, but by then its seaworthiness had been established.

The extent of Liaqat's—and his co-worker's—achievements may be measured by the observation of two responsible foreigners. Our first quotation is from O.M. Green's review of *Making of Pakistan* by Richard Symonds. In the course of the review, Green observed that the creation and rapid consolidation of Pakistan was "one of the greatest romances of history" and pointed out how Pakistan had belied the forebodings of those who thought that Pakistan would not prove viable or durable. He wrote:

"No birth was ever more frowned upon by Cassandras than Pakistan's. How triumphantly she has defeated the prophets of woe, creating out of nothingness a stable Government with balanced budget, favourable trade balance and foreign policy of its own, is now for the first time comprehensively told by Mr. Symonds."

Green's review appeared in *The Observer* of London on 30 April 1950, i.e. a little more than a year before Liaqat's death. The next quotation is from the pen of a distinguished American, David E. Lilienthal, a former Chairman of the world-famous Tennesse Valley Authority. He wrote in the course of an article which was reproduced in *The Hindu*, Madras, on 26 August 1951, i.e. a few weeks before the sad end of Liaqat:

"Pakistan is a country that is moving towards the kind of modern outlook that in a brief span of years transformed a past-ridden Turkey into a forward-looking nation, a bulwark of strength to the free world. Democracy and democratic ways now have a great foothold in this new nation of Pakistan. Her people, with great courage, have surmounted amazing difficulties these past four years. She has survived a stupid economic war against her by her big neighbour India; has made headway in the emancipation of women from their thirteenth-century status; is developing irrigation, agriculture and industry with an energy and practical approach that is inspiring to see.

"The Pakistanis as individuals are a delightful people, approachable, friendly. charming in manner and custom; their diplomatic representatives in the United States and at the UN are exceptionally able and attractive individuals. But war [with India over the Canal Waters] would reverse the whole trend in Pakistan, put a stop to development, put religious fanaticism and the reactionaries in the saddle.

"In his study in Karachi I visited Pakistan's Prime Minister, Liaqat Ali Khan, a mild-mannered lawyer, a partition refugee from western United Provinces and East Punjab, very Western in dress, appearance and speech. Liaqat never raised his voice, never spoke in bitterness. But his resolution was plain, and what he said, when he put the case of Pakistan, was as strong as words could make it."

The above remarks are of particular interest, not only for the personal references they contain to Pakistan's first Prime

Minister but also for showing that, by the end of Liaqat's regime, Pakistan had enough achievements to its credit to interest foreign statesmen in the advantages of its survival and continued progress!

Appendix I

CULTURAL BASIS OF HINDU-MUSLIM SEPARATISM

ON pages 32 and 33 a reference has been made to the beginning of Hindi-Urdu controversy in the seventh decade of the last century and an account given of Syed Ahmad Khan's conversations with the Commissioner of Benares in 1867 as well as a translation of his letter, dated 29 April 1870, prophesying that the Hindu attempt to replace Urdu by Hindi would strike at the root of Hindu-Muslim unity. Dr Asoke Majumdar's[1] *Advent of Independence* provides important additional material regarding the cultural history of the period. As this book is not easily available in Pakistan, some of the relevant details are given below.

The data provided by Dr Asoke Majumdar clearly indicates that the Hindus took the lead in Hindu-Muslim separatism. After referring to "the beginning of the nationalist movement which was essentially Hindu and Bengali in character,"[2] he points out that the successors of Ram Mohan Roy "were essentially Hindu religious or social reformers". By 1867, the idea of Hindu-nationalism was finding expression in influential quarters. In that year, "Rajnarain Bose (maternal grandfather of Sri Aurobindo) who started the idea of nationalism in Bengal" initiated "the Hindu-mela, which met annually from 1867 to 1880, and for which Tagore wrote two charming songs. Inspired by the Hindu-mela, the 'National Society' was founded in 1870 to promote unity and national feelings among the Hindus".[3] When objection was

1. Dr Asoke Majumdar is the son of the well-known Indian historian, R.C. Majumdar, and is Assistant Editor of the series, *History and Culture of the Indian People*, published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay.
2. A.K. Majumdar, *Advent of Indendepence*, p. 39.
3. Ibid., pp. 39–40.

taken to the use of the word "national" for a Hindu organisation, the *National Paper*, the organ of the Hindu-mela replied: "We do not understand why our correspondent takes exception to the Hindus [*sic*] who certainly form a nation by themselves, and as such a society established by them can very properly be called a national society."[4]

Dr Majumdar points out :

"that in those days and even later the term 'Bengali' meant only the Hindu residents of Bengal, while the Muslims of Bengal were invariably referred to as Muslims. The only other large group of Muslims was to be found in the Punjab, but the Bengalis invariably referred to the Sikhs when speaking of the 'Punjabis' and it was the martial exploits of the Sikhs which raised an echo in the hearts of the Bengali nationalists. They also took to heart the struggle of the Marathas and the Rajputs against the Muslims. Bankim wrote several historical novels painting the Rajput princes as the flower of chivalry and the Muslims—with one exception —as discomfited villains. These novels were translated in all the Indian languages and their effects can be imagined. Bankim's novels were based on Tod's *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan* which sustained the Hindu revivalist movement to a degree not usually appreciated."[5]

He adds :

"Tagore wrote poems on Rajput, Sikh and Maratha heroes, but except for the solitary poem on the Tajmahal where he had to bring in Shahjahan, no figure of Muslim India stirred his imagination to bring out a verse. . . . The result was that the Bengali language which developed during the nineteenth century produced a 'Hindu' literature."[6]

The same separatist trend was now visible with regard to Persian, which had been extensively cultivated by the Hindus of Bengal till the early years of the nineteenth century.[7] As Dr Majumdar points out: "Raja Ram Mohan Roy knew both Persian and Arabic but none of his successors did, who were all Sanskrit scholars."[8] He remarks elsewhere :

4. Ibid., p. 40. 5. Ibid., pp. 40–41. 6. Ibid., p. 41.

7. For a remarkable study of the interest shown in Persian and Urdu by Bengali Hindus during the nineteenth century, see Shanti Ranjan Bhattacharya's *Bengali Hinduon ki Urdu Khidmat* (Urdu).

8. Majumdar, op, cit., p. 41.

"[Rabindra Nath] Tagore's father had some poems of Hafiz translated into Bengali. Tagore must have read it, but I have failed to trace any mention of Hafiz in Tagore's work. Other Tagores of the poet's generation translated important works into Bangali, his brother having translated Tilak's Marathi *Gitarahasya*. Vivekananda's father also was a great admirer of Hafiz but he had not read the *Gita*. Vivekananda, on the other hand, was a good Sanskrit scholar, but knew no Persian."[9]

Developmentts similar to those which made Bengali a Hindu language also took place in other modern languages in Hindu areas. Dr Majumdar writes:

"The other modern Indian languages also developed rapidly during the nineteenth century; of the South Indian languages, Tamil had a long tradition behind it, but entirely Hindu, and was developed by Hindu writers. Modern Marathi inherited the tradition of the medieval saints like Namadeva and Jnanadeva; Gujarati, Oriya, and Assamese also followed similar trends. The literary movement in India, of which they felt justly proud, was essentially the work of Hindu writers, based largely either on Sanskrit or medieval Bhakti literature; new ideas were borrowed from English literature."[10]

Developments in predominantly Hindu areas or even in Bengal did not lead to serious problem. According to Dr Majumdar: "This was possible because in all these areas Muslims were an insignificant minority, and in Bengal far behind the Hindus intellectually; but trouble arose in the Hindi-speaking area where Urdu had so far been the dominant language."[11] With regard to Hindi-Urdu controversy, about which Syed Ahmad Khan's reaction has been given elsewhere, Majumdar says:

"In the early nineteenth century Hindustani, or the language of Upper India, really signified Urdu. It is difficult to determine as to when the Hindus began to agitate against Urdu, but beginning from 1869 the Hindus are found organising meetings to mobilize public opinion and appealing to the government to replace Urdu, a Muslim language, by Hindi, 'the national language of the country'. In Bihar, then a part of Bengal, orders were issued to replace Urdu by Hindi written in Nagri characters; persistent attempts were made to ignore the order and was only

9. Ibid.. p. 57. 10. Ibid., p. 41. 11. Ibid.

given effect to in 1881 after peremptory orders had been issued by Sir Ashley Eden, the Lt.-Governor."[12]

According to Majumdar, Bengali officers serving in Bihar played an important part in replacement of Urdu by Hindi in that area :

"At this time Bihar was administratively a part of Bengal and the introduction of Hindi was mainly due to the Bengali officers to whom Sanskritized Hindi presented no difficulty. As Sanskrit was printed in the Nagri script, they preferred Nagri to the unknown Arabic script of Urdu."[13]

In course of time the demand was also taken up in U.P. Majumdar says elsewhere :

"A lecture on Nagree vs. Urdu was delivered by Baboo Boodhee Bullubh Punt at Nynee Tal Institution on August 28, 1869. Boodhee Bullubh's lecture was virulently anti-Urdu. The President, Mr. Gunga Dutt Punt, in course of his speech said that 'as Urdoo only took its rise on the conquest of the country by the Mahomedans and as it was for the convenience of the said conquerors that it was introduced, now that the Mahomedans have in their turn been conquered by a race talking neither Urdoo nor Hindi, the national language of the country should be reverted to, *viz.*, Hindi. . . ."[14]

Incidentally Majumdar gives some interesting details regarding the Muslims of Bengal. After referring to the series of the Wahabi trials from 1864 to 1871, he says:

"The result of the post-Mutiny activities of the Wahabis, however, was inimical to the interests of their community. The British became convinced that neither the Sikhs nor the Marathas, but the Muslims were their real and implacable enemy. The Muslims of Bengal had taken the most active part in the Wahabi movement, while those of U.P. were quite indifferent to it. So the Bengali Muslims were gradually deprived of government patronage and jobs, while no harm befell the U.P. Muslims."[15]

Even before this, Bengali Muslims had suffered owing to their poor knowledge of English, and peculiar local regulations which affected them adversely. "In the U.P., knowledge of English was

12. Ibid., pp. 41–42. 13. Ibid., p. 57. 14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., p. 43.

not essential for several important appointments, but it was made obligatory in Bengal where the Muslims stood aloof from the new schools and colleges."[16] Majumdar adds:

"But in 1863, Nawab Abdul Latif, who had been opposing the Wahabi movement, founded the pro-British Muhammadan Literary Society, and five years later (January 30, 1868) made a vigorous plea for the English education of Muslim boys and suggested the elevation of the Anglo-Persian department of the Calcutta Madrassa to the status of a college. Abdul Latif's idea was partly realized in 1873, when the munificent legacy of Muhammad Moshin was converted into a Trust Fund to pay two-thirds of the fees of any Muslim student in any English school or college in Bengal."[17]

Later, according to Dr Majumdar, another factor crept in so far as the Bengali Muslims were concerned:

"Their leaders like Amir Ali and Abdul Latif insisted that Urdu and not Bengali was the language of the Bengali Muslims, and that instructions should either be given in Urdu or in a highly Persianized Bengali. Though the Government remained somewhat indifferent to this demand, the Muslims took it up seriously till the formation of Pakistan, after which the East Pakistani Muslims began to agitate for the recognition of Bengali as their national language, and a few Muslim students were shot dead at Dacca by the Muslim police. But till 1947, the Bengali Muslims considered Bengali as a Hindu language, and Urdu as their mother tongue. The non-Bengali Muslims, like Amir Ali or Abul Kalam Azad, never learned Bengali, and this ignorance was a hallmark of aristocracy in Muslim Bengal."[18]

16. Ibid. 17. Ibid., p. 44. 18. Ibid., pp. 44–45.

Appendix II

QUAID-I AZAM'S OFFER OF A JOINT DEFENCE PACT WITH INDIA AND PRIME MINISTER NEHRU'S REACTION

I

THE following extracts are taken from an account of the interview given by the Quaid-i Azam to Dr Eric Streiff, special correspondent of the *Neue Zurcher Zeitung*, Zurich (Switzerland):

Q. Is there any hope of India and Pakistan coming to a peaceful settlement of their own with regard to their differences and disputes on very vital and important matters?

A. Yes, provided the Indian Government will shed the superiority complex and will deal with Pakistan on an equal footing and fully appreciate the realities.

Q. In international affairs will Pakistan and India work jointly and also join hands for the defence of their borders—both land and sea—and co-operate against any outside aggression?

A. Personally, I have no doubt in my mind that our own paramount interests demand that the Dominion of Pakistan and the Dominion of India should co-ordinate for the purpose of playing their part in international affairs and the developments that may take place, and also it is of vital importance to Pakistan and India as independent sovereign States to collaborate in a friendly way jointly to defend their frontiers both on land and sea against any aggression.

But this depends entirely on whether Pakistan and India can resolve their own differences and grave domestic issues in the first instance. In other words, if we can put our house in order internally, then we may be able to play a very great part externally in all international affairs (*Dawn*, Karachi, 12 March 1948).

II

New Delhi, 29 March.—The Prime Minister, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, indicated in the Indian Legislature today that the Government of India would gladly consider the question of joint defence with Pakistan "when the time is ripe for it".

Replying to Mr Brajoshwar Prasad, Pandit Nehru said that Government had seen the Press report regarding Mr Jinnah's offer to a Joint Defence Pact between India and Pakistan.

Q. Have the Government of India been approached either officially or non-officially by the Government of Pakistan for the conclusion of a joint defence pact?

Pandit Nehru.—Government have received no such offer either officially or otherwise. The question of joint defence, however, is important from the point of view of both India and Pakistan and Government will gladly consider this when the time is ripe for it.—*API* (*Dawn*, Karachi, 31 March 1948).

Appendix III

LIST OF THE PRESIDENTS OF THE ALL-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE

Year	*Name of the President*
1907	Adamjee Pirbhoy
1908	Sir Ali Imam
1909	Sir Aga Khan
1910	Nabiullah
1912	Nawab Salimullah
1913	Sir Muhammad Shafi
1915	Mazhar-ul-Haq
1916	M.A. Jinnah
1917	Maulana Muhammad Ali
1918	A.K. Fazlul Haq
1919	Hakim Ajmal Khan
1920	Dr M.A. Ansari
1921	Maulana Hasrat Mohani
1923	Ghulam Muhammad Bhurgri
1924	M.A. Jinnah
1925	Sir Abdur Rahim
1926	Sir Abdur Qadir
1927	Sir Muhammad Yaqub
1929	M.A. Jinnah
1930	Sir Muhammad Iqbal
1931	Sir Zafrullah Khan
1933	K.B. Hafiz Hidayat Husain
1934	M.A. Jinnah
1936	Sir Wazir Hasan
1937-47	Quaid-i Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah

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INDEX

The Prophet and His Message

Dr Khalifah Abdul Hakim

The author presents the essential facts of the life of the Holy Prophet ascertainable from the authentic histories or traditions and supported by intrinsic evidence from the text of the Holy Qur'an. This serves as an illuminating background to the larger part of the book dealing with the Holy Prophet's message to mankind. In this part the rationale of all the major Islamic tenets is brought out in a lucid discussion, at a high philosophic level, in consonance with the dynamic and progressive spirit of Islam.

Life and Times of Mohamed Ali

Dr Afzal Iqbal

This is the first full-length biography of Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar in English, based mostly on newly opened official records and private papers.

The author has adopted the chronological approach which helps create a perspective.

Pakistan Movement and Kemalist Revolution

S. Qudratullah Fatimi

A study in historical parallelism.

INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC CULTURE
CLUB ROAD LAHORE